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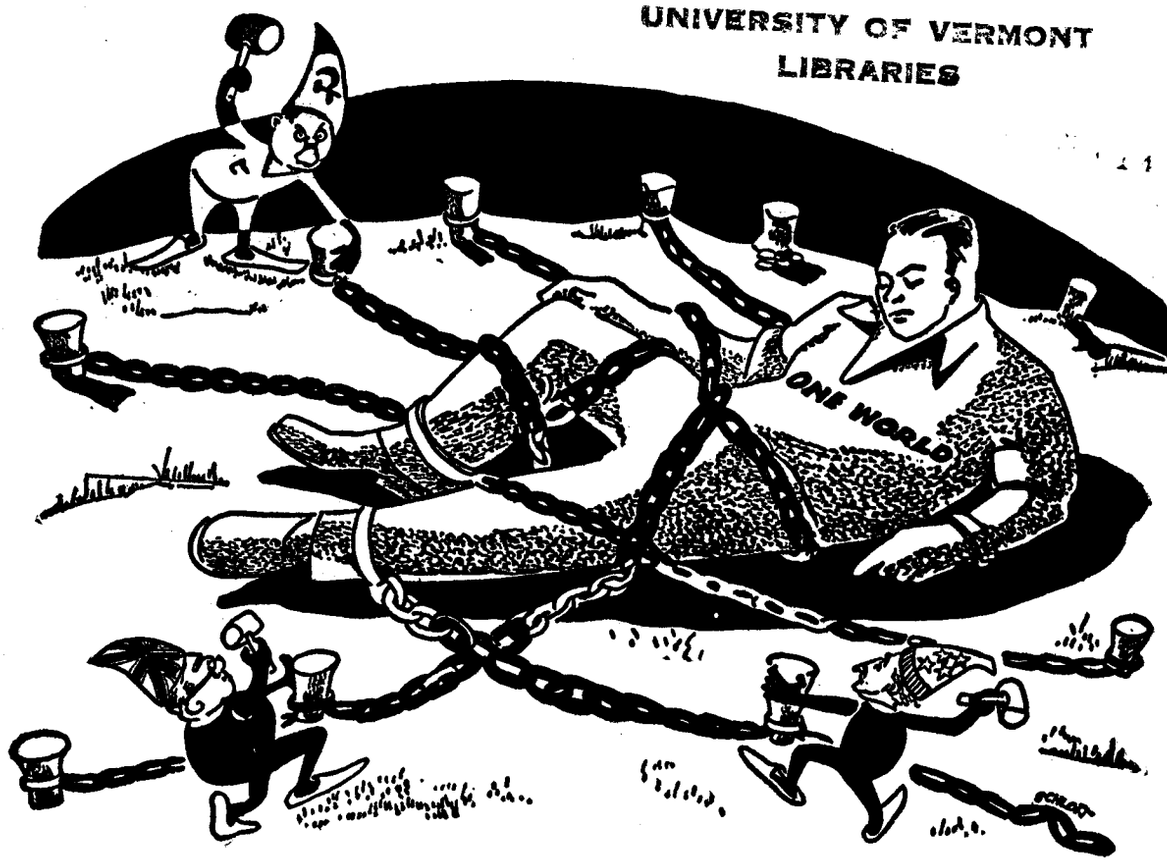


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# THE NEW REPUBLIC

*A Journal of Opinion*

VOL. 114, NO. 24 NEW YORK, MONDAY, JUNE 17, 1946 NUMBER 1646


## America, UN and the Atom

THE FIRST SESSION of the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission opens this week under less than happy auguries. As has previously been pointed out in these columns, the advisers to the U. S. delegate, Bernard M. Baruch, are not such as to inspire confidence. They are scarcely the men from whom to expect new and uninhibited solutions to a revolutionary new problem.

Much worse, what little is known of Baruch's own position provokes the deepest misgivings. He is presumably to advance as the American plan the superb and hopeful Acheson-Lilienthal program for international atomic control. But for some weeks, Baruch has been in bitter and apparently still unresolved conflict with Undersecretary Acheson. Washington information is that Baruch is liable to wreck the plan, wittingly or accidentally, by two paradoxical approaches. On the one hand, he is believed to be ready to abandon certain of its fundamentals, and on the other, he is on the way to vitiating it by driving it too far, by riding it beyond its bounds.

In direct sabotage of the plan, Baruch is known to oppose its recommendation that all uranium and thorium ore deposits be owned and operated outright by the proposed supra-national Atomic Development Authority. Instead—and here are signs of the influence of his big-time, mine-promoting adviser, Fred Searles—Baruch favors private ownership of the mines and their operation under license from the World Authority.

His word for this set-up is "dominion." But by whatever name Baruch chooses to call his rose, the idea violates one of the basic concepts of the Acheson-Lilienthal scheme. The two brilliant new contributions made by that plan are, first, to render inspection possible by making it a part of the much more inviting and appealing job of positive research and development, and second, to make detection of violations more certain by avoiding all questions of intent; the mere commission of certain types of act, regardless of motive, becomes positive proof of violation because, by the nature of those acts, they can be construed only as overt and belligerent. Thus, any nation found mining uranium is by that fact committing an hostile act. Detection would be relatively simple and sure.

This surety and simplicity would be forfeited by Baruch's prospective gesture to the private mining interests. If mines can be operated by an agency other than the World Authority, the consequence must be an elaborate, negative-minded, Volstead-era type of inspection to check the amounts of ore produced and to watch its flow from mine to processing plant.

As if to make up for this defection from the plan, Baruch is reported to be compensating by over-enthusiastic support of its other aspects, with equally damaging results. He has been of a mind, and may still be, to demand that the plan go further than originally written. He feels it should contain provisos to be invoked in the event of violation, a spelling out of the sanctions to be applied if one nation is caught red-handed. Such provisos were omitted from the Acheson-Lilienthal report because a violation under that plan was equivalent to an act of war preparation, or to the breach of any other international agreement of comparable significance. A violation in the atomic agreement would pose the same problem that would follow any other breach of faith—whether to go to war or not.

BUT BY DEMANDING that sanctions be written into the agreement, Baruch raises very serious problems. He has been reported as favoring the abolition of the veto power now held by the Big Five, in the atomic-energy field. Practically all intelligent and informed people hope for the ultimate abolition of the veto power, the surrender of a substantial degree of national sovereignty and the creation of at least a limited, and ultimately a complete, world government.

The question, however, is one of timing. Any demand now for immediate abolition of the veto would probably raise great difficulties as far as at least two of the Big Five are concerned—Russia and the United States. Those who attended the San Francisco Conference at which the United Nations was created know that the choice at that time was the United Nations with the veto, or no United Nations. That was before


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the atomic age began, and since then, the arguments against the veto have become a thousand times stronger. Thus far, however, there is little evidence that either the rulers in the Kremlin or many persons in the American State Department and Congress recognize these changed conditions. We can only hope that the Baruch report, while fundamentally right about the abolition of the veto, will not be presented in such a way as to endanger the continuance of the United Nations either through resistances in Washington or in Moscow. For there is little satisfaction in having pushed for a position morally unassailable if by that action we bring on an atomic-bomb warfare, and our moral integrity is recorded only on our tombstones. If, indeed, anyone is left to put tombstones over us.

# OPA: Into the Valley

PRICE CONTROL is up against it. Just ahead is a deadline, literally a deadline, for the Act expires on June 30, unless it is renewed by Congress. Just behind are all the anti-OPA forces closing in for the kill. At this critical juncture, the Office of Price Administration was slugged again—this time by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee.

The bill before the Senate this week would leave only a pretense of price control. Chester Bowles, director of Economic Stabilization, broke with the tradition that an agency executive does not go to the people over the heads of Congress, to call it a monstrous thing, a fraud on the American people and a piece of legislation that no honest man could administer. Paul Porter, Bowles's successor in the OPA, was equally outspoken. If the bill reported out of the Banking and Currency Committee should become law, he said, effective price and rent control would end.

An examination of the main amendments attached to the bill by a majority of committee members shows why Bowles and Porter spoke as desperately as they did.

Amendment No. One, which should be labeled killing instead of crippling, would end all price control on meat, poultry, eggs and dairy products on July 1. If it passes, no one knows how high meat prices would go, but a 40 to 50-percent rise seems certain. Milk, butter, cream, cheese, eggs and poultry would soar alongside. And it must be remembered that these foods make up 60 percent of the average consumer's food bill.

This would be only the beginning. If controls are removed from meat, the unlimited profits to be made would offer farmers an irresistible inducement to feed their grain to livestock. Bakers and other cereal users, to say nothing of agencies buying for famine relief, would have little chance at it. Price control on grains would be the next to go. Such an action would drive up the price of bread about five cents a loaf. In such a situation, it would be impossible to hold down the prices of other agricultural commodities or to keep control over restaurant prices.

Probably the strongest Senate fight will center about this amendment, which like many another bears the name of a Democrat, Senator McFarland of Arizona. The anti-OPA forces in the Senate will seek to extend it further, and seem to have the votes to succeed.

Subsidies shrink into unimportance if price controls are wiped out. The committee cut the $2 billion requested to $1.1 billion. However, the latter figure stayed in the bill only until it could get to the floor. Approximately two-thirds of the sum is assigned to hold down the prices of meat and dairy products. If they are decontrolled, their subsidy allotment automatically would be dropped.

The so-called decontrol amendment would shift the final authority to end controls over other products to the Secretary of Agriculture and a new three-man decontrol board. It would also give Secretary Anderson, who is not noted for his love of subsidies and strict price control, the final word on agricultural prices.

Another amendment wipes out the OPA's maximum-average-price plan, under which the clothing industry was forced to produce a certain percentage of low and medium-cost clothing. A group of amendments, put in by Senator Bankhead (D, Ala.) before he became ill, takes care of cotton—the textile mills are assured a profit on every item; the OPA is forced to set ceilings taking account of the current rather than the parity price of raw cotton; the mills would receive a five-percent incentive price increase when they reach 90 percent of their peak production; and the OPA loses its power to set margins to check speculation in cotton futures. Still another amendment forbids the OPA to cut the margins of automobile, appliance and farm-implement dealers. It would add about $500 million a years to consumers' bills.

Only in one instance did the committee hold back. By an eight-to-eight tie vote, it rejected an amendment by Senator Taft (R, Ohio) to give producers a profit on every item. This proposal was the equivalent of the cost-plus, profit-on-every-item Wolcott amendment adopted by the House. It was the only major House amendment which the committee did not put into the Senate bill in some form or other.

It is now generally conceded in Washington that the Senate will pass a bill at least as devastating as that placed before it by the committee. The likelihood is that it will be worse. Under these circumstances, the President already has said that he will use his veto.

After a veto, three possibilities are open. Congress could pass its bill over the veto; it could yield and extend the OPA in a form acceptable to the Administration; or it could let the OPA die.

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It now seems unlikely that the necessary two-thirds vote could be mustered to override a veto. A Congress as bent as this one on curbing price control would not want to take the second course, but might yield in fear of an inflationary explosion. The decision, however, may very well be to let the OPA die. Representative Wolcott (R, Mich.), who leads the House Republicans on OPA matters, already has made this clear. "We'll go all-out to override the President's veto," he said. "If that fails, we'll pass a resolution to continue rent controls and let the OPA die on June 30."

# Problems at Paris

THE SECOND SESSION of the World War II peace conference will open in Paris on June 15. The recent verbal duel between Messrs. Byrnes and Bevin and Mr. Molotov has already conditioned the atmosphere in which the parley will be held. The most that can be hoped for is that the future peace will be one of compromise rather than one of concessions extracted at sword's point. Unfortunately, many of the real issues are obscured by fictitious demands advanced for purposes of diplomatic bargaining. The following list of matters in dispute may help to dispel some of the current political fog:

*Germany.* – The American proposal for a 25-year joint occupation of Germany by the Allies is a major issue. It would seemingly commit this country to a *de-facto* enforcement of the Potsdam decisions. The Russians see in it an attempt on the part of the United States to secure a military base for an eventual war against the USSR. It would prevent Russian withdrawal after German Communists and other sympathizers with the USSR have firmly established themselves in the Russian zone. The Soviet Union's refusal to accept the proposal will probably win her more friends in Germany. Acceptance might seriously affect the economic unification of Germany, which is considered necessary to prevent hunger and starvation. It is also connected with the reparations question.

*Reparations.* – The delivery of reparations in kind, provided for at Potsdam, has broken down as a result of the division of Germany into four zones. The U. S. Military Government has refused to make further deliveries to the Russians on the ground that the latter have stopped the flow of needed foodstuffs from eastern to western Germany. Continuance of the zonal division of Germany proposed by Secretary Byrnes would probably necessitate a cut in the reparations based on those industrial capital goods now available. It should be recalled that industrial disarmament was originally intended to make a long-term military occupation unnecessary.

*The Ruhr and Rhineland.* – While the French are likely to drop their demand for the separation of the Rhineland, they and the British will probably insist on the internationalization of the Ruhr. Russian policy in this respect will presumably be guided by whatever decisions are made regarding Germany as a whole.

*Italy.* – Yugoslavia is demanding Trieste, the Italian port at the head of the Adriatic Sea. Russia supports this claim, but Britain and America oppose it on the ground that the transfer of Trieste would result in a standing dispute between Italy and Yugoslavia. Internationalization of the port, with cultural and civic autonomy, has been proposed as a reasonable compromise solution.

Russia still insists on $100 million in reparations from Italy. The United States holds that Italy is in no position to pay; that, in effect, the reparations would have to derive from American loans.

*The Balkans.* – Final settlement of the Rumanian-Hungarian and Rumanian-Bulgarian frontier will have to be made. Preliminary agreement has been reached on the return of Transylvania from Hungary to Rumania, while Bulgaria will be given the Southern Dobruja. The political situation in Rumania may also come up for discussion. The Western Allies are still dissatisfied with the incomplete execution of the Yalta agreement and will probably press for democratic elections, with foreign observers present.

*Colonies.* – An unsettled problem is what to do with Italy's North African colonies. At the first Paris conference, the Russians offered to withdraw their demand for a mandate over Tripolitania; many observers thought this demand had probably been made primarily for bargaining purposes. Placing the colonies under a United Nations trusteeship, with Rome as the sole administrator, seems likely.

*Other Issues.* – Conclusion of a peace treaty with Austria is an important unsolved problem. An independent Austrian republic may be set up, permitting the withdrawal of Allied troops.

The future of the South Tyrol must also be settled; the inhabitants of this region boycotted the recent Italian elections.

Carinthia's future must also be settled; it is claimed by Yugoslavia. Carinthia is Austria's easternmost province.

Teschen, near the corner where Poland, Bohemia and Silesia meet, is likewise in dispute. It is claimed by both Poland and Czechoslovakia.

Briga and Tenda, in the Alps, are also an issue. The French want to take them away from Italy.

In addition, Allied relations with all the former Axis satellites should be put on a normal basis if possible.

*The Major Issue.* – The chief problem before the conference is, of course, the fundamental disagreement between Russia and the Anglo-American bloc. Each side accuses the other of jockeying for position in an atmosphere of power politics, of seeking to create spheres of influence, of disregarding the wishes of inhabitants of specific areas. Unless these mutual suspicions can somehow be allayed, a situation will be created of a sort which in the past has always led to war.

## The New Treasury Secretary

John Snyder's background and achievements to date show an outstanding lack of qualification for the job of Secretary of the Treasury to which Truman has named him. He is a banker and a conservative. His views on fiscal policy, as far as he is known to have any, are those associated with traditional "sound finance." He received his introduction to government at the RFC under Jesse Jones, an apprenticeship not calculated to develop an imaginative approach to his new responsibilities. Snyder's blundering performance as director of the OWMR showed him bewildered by the complexities of his office.

It is cruel to plunge a man of this caliber into the duties of Secretary of the Treasury. To a great extent Snyder could evade his responsibilities as director of the OWMR. Men like Chester Bowles were on hand

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to shore up the structure and forestall (so far) the worst consequences of his failure. But at the Treasury those responsibilities cannot be evaded. The Treasury faces more far-reaching decisions in the next few years than at any time since 1933. The federal tax system will have to be put on a peacetime basis. Will the opportunity to introduce reasonable flexibility in revenues be accepted? Will the resulting taxes be decently progressive? Will the tax structure be conceived as a whole or will it remain a hodgepodge?

Similar decisions regarding the handling of the federal debt and the interest rate on government bonds also must be made. Does Snyder share the old-line bankers' bias in favor of six percent? Does he realize the significance of such an attitude in relation to the prospects for housing activity, for example?

The most disturbing question of all is whether Snyder has any conception of the role of fiscal policy in a program for assuring full employment and stable prosperity. If the President's objectives in this field are to be achieved, Treasury operations must be carried on with an awareness of their effect on national income and employment.

By the presumably careful choice of President Truman, John Snyder will now have most of the power to settle these questions for the nation.

## Elections in France and Italy

The results of the elections in France and Italy should be a warning and a comfort to the United States and the USSR. A warning to the Soviet Union because the voters of both countries have subordinated the Communist Party. A warning to the United States because in both countries the Communist Party showed swiftly rising strength, with the voters giving a preponderance of power to parties which by American standards must be considered leftist, although within their own countries the winning parties stand on the Right. The Catholics, who carried the day in France by the victory of their Popular Republican Movement, have a program of collectivism, and the Catholics, who won in Italy through the instrument of the Christian Democratic Party, are bound to carry out a program of revolt against the monarchical and fascist tradition that has plagued Italy since 1870. The vote to replace the House of Savoy with a republic marks the end of a sorry epoch for the Italian people.

The principal meaning of the two elections is that it is possible for the United States and the USSR to cooperate. Their long quarrel centers around the issue of which will be dominant in a number of other countries. Now we see that in two of the leading states of Western Europe neither can be dominant. The Popular Republican Movement, with 162 seats in the Assembly, cannot ignore the influence and wishes of the Communists, with 144. The Christian Democrats, who will have about 200 seats in the Italian Assembly, must reckon with the desires of the Italian Communists, who will have 110 seats. France and Italy must inevitably carry out foreign policies that seek friendship with Russia and America, no matter how Trieste is settled. This multi-party stability in Western Europe can be transferred to Eastern Europe if the United States and Russia will let it.

## Big Steel in the West

Now that the War Assets Corporation has approved the sale of the giant modern steel plant at Geneva, Utah, to the U. S. Steel Corporation, it is up to Attorney General Tom Clark to decide the future of the West.

By its action, the War Assets Corporation has gone on record in favor of increasing the size of U. S. Steel and of a dollar-wise, policy-foolish program for disposal of government plants. By changing their valuation methods to suit the bidder, they accepted a cash offer by U. S. Steel which represents barely 25 percent of the construction cost of the Geneva plant. This acceptance means an endorsement of the continued throttling of industrialization in the West through an artificially high price structure and through discriminatory freight rates. It ends the hopes of the West for the establishment of an independent, integrated steel plant. Similarly, it represents a blow to the prospects for full employment, as these would have been enhanced by the full development of the West. On the other hand, it shows a complete disregard for the mandates of the Surplus Property Act as they relate to the inhibition of the growth of monopolies. U. S. Steel now controls a third of the national, and more than half of the Western, steel industries.

Considerable pressure has been brought on the Attorney General in support of an approval of the sale to U. S. Steel by persons honestly concerned with the problem of employment in Utah. Senator Murdock and Representative Robinson have made statements in favor of U. S. Steel. Actually, this concern was justified by the narrow approach taken by the War Assets Corporation, which could see no further than cash-on-the-line. With a broader view, these people, congressmen and Chambers of Commerce of the West, would realize that U. S. Steel would be little interested in undermining its profitable restrictive marketing practices in the Pacific Coast area, the very practices which have kept that region from developing an industry corresponding to its growth in population and income.

Attorney General Tom Clark will be in somewhat the same dilemma. If he disapproves the transaction, the War Assets Corporation policy, as heretofore evidenced, will leave a void that may lead to the idleness of the Geneva plant. However, if he approves it, he will go counter to every anti-trust law on the statute books of the United States as well as to the Surplus Property Act. As chief law officer of this country, he

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cannot well be expected to violate its laws. In disapproving the bid, he must instruct the War Assets Corporation to accept proposals from other concerns whose histories do not show evidence of acts inimical to the growth of a steel industry in the West and which are not open to the charge of being national monopolies.

## Invisible Congress: Marjorie Shearon

Much of Missouri Senator Forrest C. Donnell's fiery opposition to the Wagner-Murray-Dingell national-health bill can be credited to a demure, gray-haired little lady who sits next to him during committee hearings and quietly slips him charts and sheaves of documents and whispers suggestions as to how to fight the measure.

She is Dr. Marjorie Shearon and has the distinction of holding down two jobs: she's on the payroll of the Republican National Committee as a "research analyst" and, at the suggestion of Senator Robert Taft of Ohio, she also acts as a sort of research adviser on social-security matters to Republican Senators. Taft hasn't been back to the Senate Education and Labor Committee since Chairman Murray threatened to have him thrown out bodily, but since that day Dr. Shearon hasn't missed a session. The docile-looking lady lobbyist usually wears a blue suit and a frilly blouse, but she gives the spectators the feeling that she's minority leader of the opposition group as she takes notes on the hearings and passes material to Donnell.

Her wiles turn to wrath when she speaks of the health bill—"We don't want to live in a Hitler universe, and that's what this bill would give us." The GOP has not gone on record officially as being opposed to the health bill, although Republican Senators have taken the lead in denouncing the measure. Dr. Shearon, as the party representative, has now clarified their stand.

# Civil Liberties Upheld

MANY NEWSPAPERS were so pleased with the Supreme Court's decision upholding freedom of the press in the Miami *Herald* case that they failed to emphasize two far more important decisions handed down on the same day (June 3). These were the outlawing of Jim Crowism in interstate bus transportation and the ruling that Congress passed an unconstitutional Bill of Attainder when it forbade government salary payments to three victims of Dies Committee witch-hunting—Robert Morss Lovett, Goodwin B. Watson and William E. Dodd Jr. The opinion of Acting Chief Justice Hugo L. Black in this last case stands out as one of the most courageous and incisive defenses of civil liberties that has come from the court in a generation.

As the issues were presented to the court, the Virginia Jim Crow case did not involve civil liberties at all. Irene Morgan, a Negro woman, was arrested and convicted for refusing to move into a section set apart for colored people when her interstate bus entered Virginia. Her lawyers made the sole argument to the Supreme Court that this requirement of Virginia law imposed an "undue burden" on interstate commerce and conspicuously refrained from basing their case on the "due-process-of-law" requirement of the Fourteenth Amendment. Had they done so, and won, they would have knocked out Jim Crowism on intrastate buses and street cars. Since they raised only the issue of interstate commerce, the decision applies only to interstate passengers. The "due-process" issue probably was left out of the case for strategic reasons. This gives significance to the actions of Justices Rutledge and Black, who concurred without joining in Reed's opinion and thus seemed to be inviting a future test of the validity of Jim Crowism in local transportation.

Mr. Justice Burton's dissent in this case is one more disappointment to those who expected this "liberal" Ohio Republican to measure up to the imperatives of civil-liberty defense. He did, however, stand behind Mr. Justice Black (also a former Senator) in protest against the congressional attempt to revive Bills of Attainder.

Mr. Justice Black's opinion in the Lovett-Watson-Dodd case cuts with penetrating sharpness to the core of congressional fascism. A Bill of Attainder—punishment by a legislative act without a judicial trial—comes to life in this opinion. It is no longer a meaningless, antique phrase in school history books, but the punitive instrument of intolerant, hate-filled congressmen working under the lash of Martin Dies. Mr. Justice Black does not denounce, unless the recitation of fascistic phrases from the *Congressional Record* is denunciation. He uses cold, sharp logic to dissect the specious argument of the opposition that the law forbidding salary payments to the three named government employees is not punitive, but merely a regulation regarding the disbursing of money; that it does not bar them from government employment, since they can still be employed (by any department head who is willing to defy Congress) and sue for their salaries in the Court of Claims. These amazing arguments, advanced by special counsel for Congress, were indorsed in the separate opinion of Mr. Justice Frankfurter, who contended that the salary prohibition could not be a Bill of Attainder because President Roosevelt signed the war-appropriation bill to which it was a rider. Since the President had no desire to punish the three men, it could not be said that the law had such an intent according to his line of reasoning. Frankfurter neglected to mention that Roosevelt was forced to sign the bill in order to carry on the war and publicly denounced the rider as unconstitutional.

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# Washington Wire

## Stalemate in Congress?

THE AMERICAN governmental machine has one terrifying defect: its clutch can jam when it's plunging down the steepest hill. The results of a midterm congressional election such as we now face can render the President impotent at a moment of major crisis. It can do so by giving the minority party control of one or both houses of Congress, where it exercises veto power. There's no way out of this difficulty under our system. What people forget is that it happens often and generally produces a two-year stalemate.

Four months from now, at midterm election, the voters will decide whether Harry Truman is to be a lame-duck President. If Republicans capture the House they will end an all but unparalleled 14-year Democratic dominance in Washington. Very few controversial Truman measures have been getting through even with nominal Democratic control of both houses of Congress; with GOP House control Truman will get none. Domestic stalemate might also spread to international affairs. A prime minister could resign under such circumstances in the parliamentary system; under our system a President just sits and suffers.

Minority-party control in Congress isn't an occasional accident. I have been doing some research on the subject; eight out of sixteen Presidents since Lincoln faced hostile party control in one or both houses at some point in their terms. Truman may be the ninth. Four Presidents—Hayes, Cleveland, Wilson and Hoover—had opposing party leaders in control of both houses simultaneously.

This isn't an occasional freak of U. S. politics. In terms of time, twenty of the eighty-one years since Lincoln's death have seen a minority party in control of the legislature, in part or whole. That's a ratio of one year in four. Almost inevitably the situation brings stalemate. It is all part of our system of separated powers. What is worse, divided control normally comes at a period of stress. At the two greatest crises in America's recent domestic history—the League fight under Wilson and the 1929 collapse under Hoover—the Executive and Legislature were locked in partisan battle. Both Presidents lost the midterm elections; in effect they were repudiated but couldn't resign.

Does Truman face loss of the House now? There is full employment. There is a tremendous inflationary boom. Why should anybody be dissatisfied? Until recently, observers felt confident that Democrats would keep control under almost any circumstances. Now, however, doubts have sprung up. Our Harry hasn't been doing so well. It's hard not to feel that he has lost ground badly in past weeks. That's particularly true with the liberal-labor elements on which he is dependent. The GOP probably can't capture the Senate. But GOP leaders are licking their chops over House prospects. Republicans need to take away just about 27 seats from Democrats to get formal control.

Divided party rule in Washington releases partisanship on both sides. A lot of us have forgotten what it's like—we haven't seen a situation like that since the last two miserable years of Hoover. Senator Pepper, in a recent article in the *New Republic*, summed it up: "After being out of office 16 years, their [the Republicans] appetite for all the powers, privileges and perquisites that go with the present outmoded system will probably be overpowering." Candor compels one to say that the same thing would hold true of the Democrats, were roles reversed. GOP capture of the House means that no tax, tariff or reconstruction bill could go through without their consent. Perhaps you think there's been frustration in Washington recently? It will be a lot worse if the parties divide Congress between them.

One other big point. Capture of the House is the traditional preliminary for winning the presidency two years later. With one dubious exception since the Civil War, the minority party which took the House away from the Administration at midterm captured the White House two years later. The sole "exception" was the disputed Tilden-Hayes election of 1874 where Tilden won but was robbed of victory although he had a 250,000-vote popular majority. The rule was followed for Cleveland (twice), McKinley, Wilson, Harding and Franklin Roosevelt.

Once a minority party has the House it can raise such confusion that popular resentment against the President mounts. It may be said this is an unfair system, that it's a bad system, but it's the system we have, and that's how it works. It adds up simply to this: The election this fall, by precedent and actuality, is more than a series of parochial congressional engagements; presidential stakes are involved. For the first time in a decade and a half, Republicans are within striking distance of capturing the House, with the presidency behind. The law of averages is on their side.

*Notes.*—This column regrets Vinson's Supreme Court appointment, not for the Court but for the cabinet; it replaces a balanced liberal on the cabinet with a second-rate conservative . . .The high court is normally important not for its affirmative but negative qualities; there seem few present signs of radical social-welfare legislation reaching the Court which Vinson might help defend . . . It's true that Vinson should make an admirable Chief Justice at a time when all the Roosevelt judicial prima donnas need a strong, genial hand. . . . Truman's bankruptcy of first-class new talent is a sorry point; there's an unfortunate feeling that it's "not the thing" to take a job under him. . . . Down to the maritime strike at least, absence of violence in America's strike wave has marked amazing evidence of growing maturity in labor relations. . . . Quick British loan passage now seems certain. . . . Secretary Schwellenbach was neither consulted nor knew beforehand about Truman's proposal to "draft" strikers on government-seized properties. . . . The Hill-Taft federal-aid-to-education bill (S. 181), providing an ultimate $250 million annually to help equalize U. S. public schools, has this column's indorsement; if there's a greater need in America than better Southern schools it's hard to think of it off-hand. . . . Taft, co-sponsor of the education bill, is a smart conservative: he also helped lead the Senate's defeat of Truman's "draft-strikers" proposal, 70 to 13.

*Washington* T. R. B.

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# Political Roundup

## Bad News

CAUTIOUS DEMOCRATS and faint-hearted liberals are already seeking shelter after the political devastation of the last few weeks. They have decided that the Democrats are slated to lose in 1948, and they are seeking the best cover they can find. The appointment of Fred M. Vinson as Chief Justice of the Supreme Court has accelerated this trend. Washington politicians knew that a small and powerful group in the White House palace guard had been working toward Vinson's nomination for the presidency ever since Chicago, 1944, and that they favored Vinson's move to the Court because they think any Democrat will lose in 1948 and do not want their man to be the sacrificial lamb. The already steady exodus of remaining New Dealers is moving into high gear now, and spirits at Democratic National Committee headquarters in the Mayflower Hotel are lower than they have been in thirteen years.

*California.* – Primary results in California seemed to the careless Washington eye to fit into this pattern. Bob Kenny, Democratic candidate for Governor, and Will Rogers Jr. and Ellis Patterson, candidates for U. S. Senator, all well known progressives, ran behind their Republican opponents in total votes. Governor Earl Warren broke all California traditions by winning both Democratic and Republican nominations, thus becoming the first Governor since Hiram Johnson to win two terms. As pointed out in this column on April 1, this puts Warren high up in the list of "available" Republican presidential candidates. But contrary to what many political prophets are saying, it does not necessarily throw California into the Republican column for '48. California experts from both parties privately say that the result of these statewide elections is due more to mismanagement by the Left than to any popular swing to the Right.

Five liberal groups combined to carry the banner in this campaign: the Hollywood Independent Citizens' Committee, the National Citizens' PAC, the CIO-PAC, the Progressive AFL and the Railway Brotherhoods. Their combined energy and initiative was chiefly responsible for a Democratic registration in the state of more than 750,000. They pushed doorbells to get out the vote and did their best to see that every precinct was manned with workers. But the regular party workers most experienced in election matters were largely left on the sidelines. The "coördinating committees" which the five groups set up in various congressional districts usually put the nomination of Ellis Patterson first on their list, to the chagrin of the rest of the state ticket and especially to the congressional incumbent in each district. Supporters of Will Rogers joined in raising the old "Red-menance" cry against Patterson, and seasoned Democrats claim that the result was to frighten many voters into the conservative Republican fold.

The liberal coalition hauled the Truman anti-strike bill into the middle of the campaign in its last hours. Two days before the election the five liberal organizations held a mass meeting at the Los Angeles Olympic Auditorium, billed as a protest against Truman's anti-labor program. Labor had already received direct word from congressional candidates as to their stand on the measure, and the middle-class majority of Democratic voters in Southern California were still smarting under the effects of a 28-day street railway and bus strike which left them more sympathetic to Truman's proposal than not. The untried liberal politicians either did not see, or disregarded, this essential practical point, and they thus helped turn some voters Republican by spending their money this way instead of in ballyhooing the Democratic ticket.

The greatest problem on the Democratic side was having both Patterson and Rogers in the running for the Senate. A large part of the New Dealers in the state had on enthusiasm for either man and had done their best, as reported here April 1, to get someone as strong as George Outland in the race. Bob Kenny was responsible for this as well as for most of the other untenable and unworkable compromises that had been forced on California liberals in recent years. His own drastic defeat resulted mainly from Warren's apparently good record, Kenny's own weak campaign and the shortcomings of his personal machine. The fact that his opportunism has landed him in the ash can is no consolation to any Democratic group in the state, for they were all behind him and will suffer by the fact of continued Republican control. Over-emphasis on the Rogers-Patterson contest meant that the rest of the state Democratic ticket suffered.

And finally, the peculiar California system of cross-filing, whereby a candidate can enter both Democratic and Republican primaries, always favors the incumbent. Hence Warren had a big edge. Many new voters were unaware of the fact that Warren is a Republican, despite efforts to acquaint them with this fact by radio, press and public meetings. Warren and, to a lesser extent, Republican Senator Knowland received many thousands of votes on the Democratic ticket from voters who believed that they were voting for a Democrat.

But California is not lost to liberalism in 1948. Democratic Representatives won by larger majorities this year than in 1944. Democratic candidates for Lieutenant Governor and Attorney General won nomination easily. Will Rogers' total vote by itself almost equaled Knowland's. He can win in November if there is unity and no sulking among the Democrats. The liberal congressmen should now step in at the state's Democratic convention in August and take over the California organization from Bob Kenny and his friends, who have proved they are not fit to run it.

*Alabama.* – As previously reported here, the campaign to elect "Big Jim" Folsom Governor of Alabama has had many of the elements of a crusade. Rural Alabama has not responded so positively to any self-proclaimed reform movement in many years. Now that Folsom has won his run-off race against Handy Ellis, the "Big Mule" (big-business) candidate in the race, progressives are waiting to see whether his first moves fit into his avowed liberal objectives to remove the poll tax, increase teachers' salaries, etc. Progressives in the rest of the country are waiting to size him up in general. They remember his determined one-man stand for Wallace at Chicago in 1944.

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# The Facts in the Maritime Crisis

As THIS ISSUE of the *New Republic* goes to press, both sides involved in the maritime contract negotiations are getting ready for a strike. The Committee for Maritime Unity, representing seven unions, has called a strike for June 15. The Navy Department has ordered all its shore stations to line up reserves and volunteers for possible duty in manning merchant ships in case of strike. AFL seafaring unions have threatened a walk-out if the government should try to act as strike-breaker. The negotiations, now carried on under the auspices of the United States Conciliation Service, are extremely fluid. Proposals and counter-proposals, claims and counter-claims are made daily. The public is confused. What are the facts? What are the merits of the unions' demands? What are the allegations of management in resisting these demands?

### How Big Is Our Merchant Marine?

At the end of the war, we had 6,000 ships totaling 56 million deadweight tons, comprising two-thirds of the world's entire postwar tonnage. The American merchant marine is today five times bigger than before the war. About 3,100 ships would be affected by the strike. Of these 2,400 are owned by the government but leased to operators on a fee basis by the War Shipping Administration.

### What Unions Are to Strike?

The strike is threatened by the Committee for Maritime Unity, set up at a conference in San Francisco in early May. It is composed of the National Maritime Union, the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, the Marine Firemen's Union, the National Union of Marine Cooks and Stewards, the American Communications Association, the Marine Engineers' Beneficial Association and the Inland Boatmen's Union—all but the Marine Firemen affiliated with the CIO. They claim a total membership of 200,000.

### Who Represents the Employers?

The American Merchant Marine Institute, the Waterfront Employers' Association of the Pacific Coast and the Pacific American Shipowners' Association.

### What Were the Original Demands?

A flat 22-cents-an-hour pay increase for the lowest ratings and graduated increases up to 35 cents an hour for skilled ratings; a 40-hour week and an eight-hour day at sea and in port, with overtime for all work in excess of eight hours; overtime payments ranging from $1.25 to $1.75 an hour; and retroactivity to October 1, 1945.

### What Are the Longshoremen's Demands?

An increase of 35 cents an hour and corresponding overtime increases; Saturday to be an overtime day; and the elimination of car-loading differentials.

### Why Are These Demands Made?

During the war, though $100 was the regular contractual wage, seamen earned about $200 a month because of overtime and bonuses. In October, 1945, the WLB handed down a decision raising the normal wage to $145. In fact, seamen now earn $60 a month less than they did in wartime. Some seamen, the unions claim, make as little as $127.50 a month for a 56-hour, seven-day week. This amounts to less than 50 cents an hour. In the stewards' category, the eight-hour day is not yet established. Stewards work 63 hours a week.

### Why Do the Employers Resist?

They claim that no true comparison can be made between work in a factory and aboard ship, either as to methods of operation or as to the characteristics of employment. They therefore hold that a 40-hour week at sea is impossible for the maritime industry. They point out that the seaman must remain with his ship, and that he is fed and lodged by his employer. They claim that granting the unions' hour demands would drastically reduce the normal duties of practically every seaman, so that as much as 25 percent in "penalty overtime" would have to be paid to compensate for "regular" work. They say that new quarters would have to be built for increased crews.

### What of Inability to Pay?

Shipping, the operators say, is an international business, with competition made keen by the difference in operating costs, determined largely by wage scales. They claim that the basic pay on American ships is two and one-half times higher than that on foreign vessels. An American seaman receives a base pay of $145 as compared with an average income of $58.25 a month on ships of 14 leading maritime nations. They reject the unions' reasoning that wage increases are absorbed by government subsidies because only twelve American lines, operating 40 percent of the American fleet on foreign routes, are subsidized. They insist that higher wages would further destroy this country's competitive position in international shipping.

### What Other Objections Are Made?

The shipowners hold that wage increases given since 1941 are greatly in excess of what is permitted under the present national wage policy. These increases, they say, total $62.50 a month, representing an increase of 75 percent, as compared with the 33-percent cost-of-living formula. They point out that in addition to wages, seamen receive board and lodging, the value of which has been set at about $75 per month.

### What About Retroactivity?

The shipowners say that there is no basis for retroactivity in the present case. They point out that the $45 raise

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granted by the WLB last fall considered all demands based on reduction of war bonuses, claims with respect to the 40-hour week, comparison with shore industry, etc.

### What Is the Unions' Position?

The unions point to the gigantic fleecing of the public treasury by the operators during the war, which has been described in the current *New Republic* series by Allen Bernard. They point to the allegedly excessive insurance collected by the operators on "rust buckets" which were sunk during the war and the huge profits made on trade-ins and sales. They point to the stiff opposition of the owners to government efforts to collect taxes on a $40-million "reserve" fund which was provided by the government itself. They claim that the average rate of profit of the major shipping companies was 80 percent during the war, as compared with less than 10 percent in American industry generally.

### What Were the Operators' Counter-Proposals?

They offered an increase of $12.50 a month in basic wages, increases of from five to 15 cents an hour in overtime and a cut in working hours for the stewards' department from nine hours' work, in a span of thirteen hours, to eight hours. This proposal was voted down by the rank and file of the NMU.

### Did the Unions Modify Their Demands?

Yes. They now ask for a 42-hour instead of a 40-hour week at sea, consisting of six hours a day, seven days a week, with overtime after 40 hours. They also reduced their relief-crew demands from ten to seven men.

### Will the Unions Make Further Concessions?

Yes. "It is our latest but not our last offer," Joseph Curran, NMU president said after the 42-hour week was proposed. "We are prepared to avert a strike. We do not want a strike. We are willing to compromise and sign a satisfactory agreement. The question is, What is satisfactory?" It is also reported that Harry Bridges, president of the ILWU, is prepared to accept the 22-cent-an-hour increase awarded his union by a federal fact-finding board.

### What Do the Operators Say?

They claim that it would necessitate an increase of about 37.8 percent in the manning scale. On a Liberty ship it would mean a total increase of 14 men. They hold that "this would place an unsupportable burden on the American merchant marine."

### Would the Strike Be Political?

Because some of the unions are led by Communists, it has been alleged that this is a political strike to strengthen communism and Russia. But the unions say that the strike will be no more political than the profits of the operators can be termed political. They say that the seamen and longshoremen will be striking for their economic demands and these alone. But they believe that joint strike action is their strongest weapon, to be used as a last resort, to achieve what they believe are reasonable demands.

### What About Troop and Relief Ships?

The San Francisco conference of the Committee for Maritime Unity made it clear in a public declaration, largely ignored or distorted in the press, that bona-fide relief ships and troopships would not be tied up by the strike. If there were no other evidence, the committee points out, this proves that the strike is not political.

### Will Picket Lines Be Respected?

The Seafarers' International Union, AFL, has announced that while it will not recognize as precedent any conclusions reached between the operators and the Committee for Maritime Unity, it will see to it that its members do not cross legitimate picket lines. Both the SIU and the Sailors' Union of the Pacific are preparing to strike in case the federal government attempts to break the CIO strike by manning ships with navy personnel. Joseph P. Ryan, president of the International Longshoremen's Association, on the other hand, has declared that he would consider picket lines of the committee political rather than economic, and expressed confidence that his men would ignore them. The Masters', Mates' and Pilots' Union, AFL, has announced that it would respect picket lines.

### Will the Government Strike-Break?

Yes. President Truman has declared that he would invoke all of his ordinary and emergency powers to keep the ships running. Orders have gone out to all naval stations appealing for aid in recruiting former servicemen and volunteers "to meet the imminent critical situation confronting the country, caused by the pending merchant-marine strike." The Coast Guard has temporarily suspended all discharges in a move to retain manpower in service.

### How Will the Unions Counter?

They have appealed to the World Federation of Trade Unions to support the strike by refusing to work on ships manned by the government, except troop and relief ships. Many foreign unions are likely to heed this appeal.

*From the NMU Pilot*

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# Are Unions Too Strong?

*by George Soule*

SIX MONTHS of costly strikes in basic industries, with more to come, pose the question, What's the matter with collective bargaining? Believers in organized labor used to say that conflict was caused largely by the fact that true collective bargaining was not practised. Labor, fighting against bitter enemies for the right to organize, could not be expected to lie down and be trampled on. A secure union, it was argued, accepted by employers, will develop concern for the welfare of its industry; it will usually be able to gain justice without stopping production; it will bring to the surface responsible leadership and will be slow to strike except in extremities.

This was a good argument in the days of open-shop drives. Is it still good now, when union rights have been written into the law and are enforced by the federal government? Is it good when old and strong unions, with the most experienced leadership, like the United Mine Workers and the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, insist on striking?

The challenge to progressives which recent events have evoked cannot be dodged. What is the answer to the charge that unions have become too strong, that the country has been delivered hog-tied to irresponsible labor leaders seeking power, that we must protect the general welfare and the prestige of the government against strikes which injure everyone, labor included? The old slogans, such as that bayonets cannot mine coal, or that forcing men to work, even if it could be done, would be slavery, are still true. But they are not enough. It is equally true that the economy must produce and distribute. No government which wanted to survive could long resist the pressure to act vigorously about protracted strikes which carry the menace, not merely of inconvenience or loss of profits, but of actual starvation.

Though many in this country do not seem to understand it, participation in a world war which demanded half the nation's productive power was certain to cause profound dislocations. Smooth transition to a postwar level of production, prices and incomes might theoretically have been possible, but in practical action it would have been a miracle. Such a miracle did not happen in 1919 and 1920, after a war which used only a quarter of the national economic effort.

Here are the circumstances, economic and psychological, which prepared the way for the present crisis:

1. During the war labor was pledged not to strike, and for the most part kept its word. Long hours of intensive work, often with inadequate housing and bad living conditions, frayed the nerves. Grievances were stored up for future action.

2. Corporate profits were by far the largest in history. Crop prices soared and farmers made more than ever before. Wage rates barely kept pace with the cost of living; in many cases they were held below the rise of actual living costs by the arbitrary "Little Steel" formula. Take-home pay rose, but only because of overtime and hard work.

3. When war production stopped, pay was reduced about one-third by cessation of overtime and down-grading. Wage earners have never been known not to resist drastic pay cuts, especially when their services were in demand. Meanwhile, living costs continued upward.

In addition, many were laid off and there was worry about future employment. Labor firmly believes that unless workers earn enough to buy what can be produced, unemployment is at hand.

4. Employers, conscious that a new general wage-price level was being established for peace, bargained stiffly to keep costs down and profits up. They regarded war profits as abnormal and did not want to mortgage possible future earnings before those earnings were in hand. Some employers also desired to "put labor in its place," and saw the chance to do so without financial risk at a time when losses could be covered by tax rebates and use of reserves laid aside during the war. Knowledge that this was the case made labor more stubborn.

The rank and file, not just the leaders, wanted action. Reckless and wanton strikes are seldom favored by the workers, but there are times when they would rather fight than surrender. This was one of them. Collective bargaining could scarcely be expected to produce settlements in all important industries without a trial of strength, when the whole system of prices and incomes was under such a strain.

WHEN bargaining fails, blame cannot always be put solely on one of the bargainers. Labor seems to be the aggressor in a strike because it refuses to work for the terms offered. But if what you are selling is a house, or a car, or a bushel of wheat, and you refuse to accept an offer which you regard as too low, are you blameworthy because the deal did not go through? Nobody has a right to say so without thorough knowledge of the circumstances. It is no different when you are selling your labor.

Before the strikes started, the President called a conference of employer and union representatives to lay a basis for industrial peace. Philip Murray of the CIO asked the employers to accept the principle that wage rates should rise. They declined to do so. Failure to agree either on a principle governing wage settlements or on a means of adjudicating disputes was equivalent

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to announcing that the issue must be fought out. For this failure the employer representatives (abetted by the AFL and John L. Lewis) were largely responsible.

The President subsequently, in a radio address to the public, asked employers to accept the principle that wage increases equivalent to the increase in the cost of living should be made without raising prices, except in hardship cases, where price adjustments would be permitted. He outlined a specific program, which was backed by carefully prepared facts and figures. In most cases, unions would have settled on this basis, but employers refused. General Motors later declined to accept the findings of a presidential fact-finding board.

The General Motors and steel strikes, as well as other important ones, were in essence strikes of employers for higher prices. When the companies won a governmental promise of price increases, they settled.

The employers were sitting pretty. They knew their losses would be covered by tax rebates and reserves. The appropriate question in these instances would seem to be, not are the unions too strong, but are General Motors, U. S. Steel and General Electric too strong?

UNIONS in the past six months roughly fall into three groups, according to the results of their bargaining. First—and seldom mentioned—is the large and important group which was able to settle without strikes. It includes the men's clothing and women's garment workers, textile workers, shoe workers, printers, many building trades and others. Here, collective bargaining, accepted in good faith by both sides, *did* work. Second is the group which was forced to strike by the refusal of employers—mostly great corporations—to accept terms regarded as reasonable by government authorities. Finally, there is the small though important group which high-pressured the government to win more than other unions by threatening public calamity.

What really brought the kick-back from "public opinion" and government were the coal and railroad strikes. In these cases union leadership must bear a heavy share of the blame.

John L. Lewis has a spotty record for his services to labor as well as for his apparent disregard of public interest. He is an autocrat in his own union, which for years has not known democracy on a national scale. Between 1919 and 1929, under his leadership, it suffered an uninterrupted series of defeats, while coal wages fell and membership dwindled. The basic trouble was, of course, the depression of the industry itself, but Lewis fought proposals to nationalize or regulate the industry even more bitterly than he fought employers. His only action was the suicidal one of keeping wage rates up in the unionized fields while failing to organize the growing non-union mines in the South.

Lewis was not only power-grasping in his union and short-sighted in his industrial policy, but a failure at public relations. He had never taken adequate pains to present the miners' case or enlist neutral support.

For a while during the New Deal he won prestige by seizing the opportunity to organize the miners and work with the CIO. But he would not remain a member of a team. First he acted as the main obstacle to peace between the CIO and the AFL; then he quit the CIO and went into the AFL on his own terms. He is a notorious raider of other unions.

The miners had a good case this time—but the public did not have a chance to learn of it from Mr. Lewis. By refusal to state his demands he created the impression that he intended to succeed by main force, regardless of the justice of his cause. And nearly everyone who was close to the affair was convinced that his objective was to enhance his personal power by winning more concessions than other unions had been able to gain. His secondary motive, it was supposed, was to put the Administration in the wrong for political purposes. (Mr. Lewis is not only a Republican, but was a bitter personal enemy of Mr. Roosevelt.)

The two railroad brotherhoods which struck had abandoned the long established practice of acting in unison with the other eighteen railroad unions. Unlike the others, they refused to accept arbitration. They also refused to abide by the results of a special presidential board of inquiry. They were within their legal rights in all this, but they weakened labor and imperiled the adjustment machinery by undermining labor unity. The striking brotherhoods are accused of building their membership by raiding the others; they are suspected of trying to win gains beyond their fellows.

To ask for unions run by men who do not want power is to ask for unions run by saints and angels. We do not expect as much in business or politics. But if unions are not to endanger their very existence—as these three unions have succeeded in doing in the past few weeks—the labor movement must look to its democracy, its public relations and its unity.

A just cause can always be weakened and sometimes ruined by bad leadership. Not all unions, but a few, must bear a share of the blame for the current breakdown of collective bargaining. It would be a poor service to the country and to labor to fail to acknowledge this fact. Incidentally, the leaders chiefly responsible for the reaction are not young radicals but aged conservatives.

THIS CRISIS, we have reason to hope, will pass before long. Those who do not want another like it should make it their first business to prevent drastic upsets of prices and production such as are caused by inflation or depression. Collective bargaining should work well enough in a healthy economy.

Repressive labor laws are not the answer, whatever may be at fault. They unite labor behind any leaders it may happen to have, good or bad, create a lasting grievance and prepare the way for trouble. Govern-

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mental regimentation of labor could not be achieved without a dictatorship.

There is no certainty that free enterprise or the collective bargaining which is an essential part of it will work well enough to be tolerable. They can work only if we as a people work them.

It is unwise for the leaders either of business or of labor to place too heavy a burden on the general tolerance which is a condition of their own continued freedom of action. The sure way to break down the existing order is to cause it to fail in providing essential human satisfactions. Exercise of great power by limited groups without corresponding responsibility can produce this failure. Voluntary submission to a minimum of fair social discipline is the price, in an industrialized world, of liberty.

# Battle for British Steel

## *by Michael Young*

"Mark my words," said my acquaintance from the City, "this is the biggest mistake that the Labor government has made. It's plain suicide to nationalize the country's greatest industry just because it's part of the socialist dogma. Besides, what will the Americans say? No, you'll come a cropper this time." And then we all began to get steamed up as the various people down the long dinner table joined in the argument. It really looked as though Britain's political honeymoon was drawing to a close.

What happened at the dinner table has been repeated in Parliament and in the columns of the national newspapers. As soon as the government announced it would nationalize steel, Winston Churchill led the Tories into battle against this monstrous interference with business liberty. Soon after, the Grand Council of the Federation of British Industries formed ranks with the British Iron and Steel Federation and denounced the whole proposal.

Certainly the Labor government will not falter. The history of the Iron and Steel Federation has been written into so many Labor primers and colorfully described at so many meetings that every British socialist is determined to regard steel as a test case. The Federation came into existence shortly after the disastrous Tory victory at the General Election of 1931. It was granted a heavy tariff on condition that the steel industry reorganize itself. The only consequence was that prices were kept so high that British steel was the most costly in the world and every steel-using industry severely handicapped. The steel cartel in Britain reached an amicable agreement with the steel cartel in Europe, and if the Federation sometimes received criticism at home, it could always rely on the friendliest commendation and coöperation from the steel barons of Nazi Germany. Of course, nothing was done to reorganize the industry. The price rings allowed the most inefficient producers to remain in existence, and the building of large modern plants was opposed.

The Federation, in a report presented to the government and subsequently published, has again promised to reorganize and, as a pledge of good faith, has on this occasion given circumstantial details down to the last blast-furnace. The report does not state how its plans will be enforced and two steel companies immediately protested they were unwilling to close works which the report proposed to scrap.

The few big industrialists who dominated the Federation presumably hoped that the Labor government would grant them compulsory powers for rationalization. If so, they misjudged the Labor Party, which is resolved to destroy the great private industrial empires by bringing them under public ownership and control and ensuring that the benefits of modernization go, not to private shareholders, but to the community at large.

Then again the report implied that the government would probably have to find part of the finance for the projected program. The Federation estimated that the necessary reconstruction, involving replacement of about 40 percent of the industry's capacity in seven and a half years, would cost £168 million, but of this sum the industry could raise only about half out of its own resources. Once more, the Federation was misjudging the Labor Party, which has always refused on principle to hand out vast amounts of public money to private industrialists. Instead, the investment in steel will be undertaken by the government and geared in with its over-all investment plans.

So the Federation has unwittingly gone some way toward making out the case for socialization. In another respect the appeal to the experience of the United States seems unfortunate. In one breath the Tories and their big-business partners are praising the efficiency of American private enterprise, including the steel industry. In another they are crying that the nationalized organization will be far too large for effective working. What they overlook is that the production of the unified U. S. Steel Corporation is two and a half times higher than the entire British output (30 million tons of steel ingots and castings in 1944 as against 12 mil-

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lion tons) and that the companies of U. S. Steel employed 287,000 people in 1945 as compared with 189,000 in the whole British industry.

But the main reason why Labor will not falter is that this battle for steel, with all its ties to other industries, is a vital battle for economic and political power. Steel has been the central bastion of the monopoly power which has ossified industry, strangled democracy and bolstered fascism in every major country from Japan to France. Either the monopolies are going to control the state and, through *their* state, the people, or the people, through *their* government, are going to control the monopolies, and this means steel. In 1945 the people of Britain, in choosing the latter, decided it was about time they had a say. Through the Labor government they are proceeding to have that say.

# The Time Is Now

## *by Ralph G. Martin*

THE PROFESSOR was still in bed Sunday morning when a student banged on the door, barged in excitedly: "Did you really mean what you said about me running for Congress?"

Professor Herman Schnurer blinked sleepily, "Why, of course. . . ."

They had talked about it over some beers the night before at Glenn's Café. It had started with a discussion about Clarence Brown, their Representative from the Seventh Congressional District.

"I just got an answer from him about a Walter Lippmann column I sent him. He warned me not to read such radical columnists. Walter Lippmann a radical! . . . God Almighty. . . ."

So they talked about Brown, how he had voted against the defense of Guam, against the absentee ballot for soldiers, even against free lunches for poor school kids.

"And we can't even get anybody to oppose him," said the professor, who had the side-jobs of Democratic county committeeman and *CIO News* editor.

"Say, how about you, Fessenden? How would you like to run for Congress?"

"Me? Are you kidding?"

Candidate for Congress! What the hell did he know about politics? Just some stuff he had read in a textbook, heard in an Antioch College classroom, read in the newspapers.

He didn't even know if he could make a speech. And what did he have to say? Tell how he won the war single-handed as a Public Relations Captain in the First Army? Or that he was 26 years old and wanted a brave new world? Or that he knew damn well he didn't have the remotest chance of beating the tightly organized Brown Republican machine?

Then why go through the motions? Why beat your head against a stone wall? He could have such a wonderful time finishing college, going on picnics with his wife Susan, leisurely enjoying being back in Yellow Springs, Ohio, again.

But, damn it, this was more important. This was Paul Robeson making a speech in the auditorium about Negro soldiers who didn't want to come back to America.

This was his friend talking about the atom bomb, saying, "Sure, Bruce, I know the world's going to hell. But until it does, I'm gonna have a good time. Anyway, what can *we* do about it?"

This was Susan speaking, Susan who made tank thermostats during the war and unionized her shop: "Bruce, we can't leave politics to the politicians. We've got to make ourselves heard and felt. This is our government. . . ."

That's why.

Shake hands with everybody, smile, keep repeating your name. See this guy, see that guy. That old man over there is the contact man for his whole county. Be nice to him. Don't compromise yourself. Don't tell him anything you don't honestly believe. But be nice to him. And when you write a publicity release, stick your name in every paragraph. Fish fries, women's clubs, churches, speeches, speeches, speeches.

Another Democratic candidate had sneaked in under the deadline. A man named Ehl, who had been running for years. He was the kind of guy who came to Democratic Party dinners dressed in his American Legion uniform and instead of making a campaign speech, he simply stood up, saluted, sat down. Now, with the war over, he had changed his tactics. Instead of saluting, he had a one-sentence speech. It was:

"I am for 100-percent Americanism."

After weeks of it, the campaign got discouraging. Of the 43 newspapers in the county, only two printed any news of the primary. But the big thing was the apathy of the people. They just didn't care. At one Democratic rally where they even had a boxing match and entertainment scheduled, only 12 people showed up.

Then the whispering campaigns:

*Bzzz . . . Bzzz. . . .* Don't vote for Fessenden. He's from that college in Yellow Springs. Everybody knows how radical the whole town is. . . .

Imagine that Fessenden plugging things like the OPA and the FEPC. He's a Communist, I tell ya. . . .

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There were other things. Susan didn't dare smoke a cigarette at the Jackson Day dinner because it might cause comment, lose votes. And how embarrassed she was when she was asked to lead an audience in singing "America" and had to sing a solo on the second stanza because nobody else knew the words.

But mostly it was trying not to explode when people walked up to him and said things like, "Don't you agree with me, young feller, that Senator Taft's health bill is downright socialistic?"

. . . You've got to be careful of everything you do and say to people, Bruce. . . . Everything means votes. . . .

Speeches. More speeches. Pass out pamphlets at the factories. The workers will listen. Don't mention your opponent's name. It gives him free publicity. People sometimes forget what you say and just remember his name. Don't forget, the county committee expects a donation. The newspapers expect you to advertise. Two speeches and two chicken dinners in one night. Speak louder, more clearly. Project your personality. You've got to sell yourself, Fessenden. . . .

You've got to sell yourself to those people of the 302,000 in this gerrymandered district who will come out and vote in the Democratic Party primary. About 8,000 maybe. And a lot of them are retired farmers, highly individualistic, who don't believe a lot of things you believe. Besides, you haven't got a chance, you know. Except for the 1936 landslide, this district has always been conservative and Republican.

THE PRIMARY RETURNS came in slowly. The vote was heavier than the last time and Fessenden carried four out of the nine counties, but he lost to Ehl by slightly more than a thousand votes.

"Discouraged? Why should I be? We'll be stronger in the next primary. I've got a lot of new contacts to pass on to the next PAC candidate. A lot of suggestions, too. He'll have to start out earlier than I did, see more people, profit by my mistakes, make more speeches. That's all. It'll take time. . . ."

Time. How much time? How much time is there before inflation, depression, atomic bombs, war?

"Susan, you know what? We've got to write to all our friends. We've got to buttonhole every liberal we know. We've got to keep saying it until we say it in our sleep—get into politics . . . get into politics. If you aren't running for office, find out who is. Write to him, talk to him, tell him what you think. Join your local political party clubs. Pass on the word. Talk. Write. Vote. If there was ever a time in our history to get excited about politics, the time is now. . . ."

# The Ship Owners Get Theirs

## "Operation Plunder," Fifth Instalment

### *by Allen Bernard*

"WE ARE NOT fighting this war to make millionaires," President Roosevelt told the nation in 1940, shortly after Pearl Harbor. He was speaking to millions of young men who were leaving jobs in private industry to enter the armed forces of the nation, where they would receive $50 per month. He was speaking to the families of more than a quarter of a million men who were to die on numerous battlefields, defending America's very existence.

The President apparently was not speaking, however, to a small group of selfish private interests in this country even then engaged in a raid upon the Federal Treasury that was to net them the highest profits in history. If he was, they couldn't hear him.

In March, 1944, the Merchant Marine and Fisheries Committee of the House of Representatives studied the financial records of some of the companies operating vessels under the notorious "Red Sea" charters of 1941. These records covered the period from December 31, 1938, to December 31, 1942, and showed an average increase in total assets of 138 percent:

| | 1938 | 1942 | Increase |
|---|---|---|---|
| American Export | $ 9,667,078 | $ 43,437,451 | 349% |
| American-Hawaiian | 12,494,682 | 24,621,002 | 99 |
| American President | 26,728,064 | 38,532,309 | 44 |
| Calmar | 3,870,275 | 10,073,408 | 160 |
| Isthmian | 18,784,265 | 41,147,420 | 119 |
| Luckenbach | 14,322,848 | 22,101,190 | 54 |
| Lykes Bros. | 6,288,527 | 49,092,033 | 680 |
| Matson | 42,716,914 | 69,679,504 | 63 |
| Shepard | 798,673 | 2,239,994 | 180 |
| Waterman | 3,386,453 | 29,983,503 | 785 |
| Weyerhaeuser | 1,472,650 | 4,168,440 | 183 |
| Total | $140,530,429 | $335,076,254 | 138% |

Lest there be any concern here for the "widows and orphans" whose all is invested in these companies, it may be well at this time to indicate their ownership. Of a total of 480,000 shares of common stock in the American Export Lines, 194,349 were held by the New York banking house of Lehman Brothers. Ninety percent of the American President Lines stock is held by the Maritime Commission; the Calmar Steamship

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Corporation is wholly owned by the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and the Isthmian Steamship Company by the United States Steel Corporation. All but a few voting shares of the capital stock of the Luckenbach Steamship Company is owned by the Edgar F. Luckenbach estate, and about two-thirds of Lykes Brothers outstanding capital stock is held by the Lykes family. The Shepard Steamship Company is owned by the Shepard Morse Lumber Company, and the Weyerhaeuser Steamship Company by the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company.

The net worth of these companies (total value of stock plus accumulated cash surplus) during the same period showed an average increase of 125 percent:

| | 1938 | 1942 | Increase |
|---|---|---|---|
| American Export | $ 4,059,536 | $ 31,119,147 | 666% |
| American-Hawaiian | 8,230,353 | 18,819,579 | 128 |
| American President | 1,792,122 | 9,169,920 | 411 |
| Calmar | 3,477,540 | 3,670,303 | 5 |
| Isthmian | 16,438,689 | 19,014,354 | 15 |
| Luckenbach | 9,719,818 | 12,902,187 | 32 |
| Lykes Bros. | 5,019,849 | 39,644,438 | 689 |
| Matson | 37,868,058 | 49,568,126 | 30 |
| Shepard | 133,088[1] | 1,606,983 | ? |
| Waterman | 2,092,041 | 15,441,144 | 638 |
| Weyerhaeuser | 1,234,594 | 1,805,516 | 46 |
| Total | $89,799,512 | $202,761,697 | 125% |

As might be expected, the net profits (after taxes) of these companies show equally amazing gains after the war began. It will be remembered that 1941 was the year of the "Red Sea" charters. *Net profits that year were more than 20 times as high as in 1938.*

Despite provision by Congress for the renegotiation of all wartime government contracts resulting in excessive profits, *not one of the government's contracts with the shipowners has been renegotiated,* according to the best information available at this time.

The highly respected and generally self-appointed spokesmen for "free enterprise" have always maintained the right of invested capital to a "fair" profit. Surely even these gentlemen would concede that 80 percent a year can scarcely be considered merely a "fair" profit—especially when it comes out of the pocket of the American taxpayer.

Comparing the profits of the above shipping companies during the banner year of 1941 with the value of the capital stock of these companies, we discover that *only two of the companies showed a profit of less than 50 percent on the stockholders' original investment.* Five registered a profit *between two and ten times* the total actual investment as represented by stock outstanding in 1941.

| | 1941 Capital Stock | 1941 Profits | Percent Profit |
|---|---|---|---|
| American Export | $ 1,480,000 | $13,678,299 | 924% |
| American-Hawaiian | 4,338,000 | 2,756,530 | 63 |
| American President | 6,784,300 | 8,217,661 | 121 |
| Calmar | 3,000,000 | 1,742,440 | 58 |
| Isthmian | 10,000,000 | 5,167,887 | 51 |
| Luckenbach | 5,228,250 | 3,959,751 | 77 |
| Lykes Bros. | 3,500,000 | 12,024,786 | 343 |
| Matson | 33,204,040 | 4,753,287 | 14 |
| Shepard | 200,000 | 689,527 | 344 |
| Waterman | 1,516,600 | 3,270,731 | 215 |
| Weyerhaeuser | 800,000 | 353,290 | 44 |
| | $70,051,190 | $56,614,189 | 80% |

In view of the above it is not surprising that all but two of the companies paid dividends totaling at least 100 percent on common stock during the five years covered by this study. Dividends (except for the American President Lines, 90-percent government-owned, and the Luckenbach Steamship Company, owned by the Edgar F. Luckenbach estate) were as follows:

| | 1938 | 1939 | 1940 | 1941 | 1942 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Export | 55% | 96 % | 100 % | 150 % | 200 % |
| American-Hawaiian | 10 | 15 | 35 | 50 | 30 |
| Calmar | 0 | 15 | 30 | 45 | 60 |
| Isthmian | 10 | 5 | 20 | 40 | 40 |
| Lykes Bros. | 0 | 5 | 23.7 | 47.1 | 25 |
| Matson | 5 | 6.5 | 6 | 7.5 | 7.5 |
| Shepard | 0 | 0 | 0 | 56 | 22 |
| Waterman | 25 | 10 | 59 | 120 | 16.8 |
| Weyerhaeuser | 0 | 20 | 0 | 44 | 37.5 |

Net Profits (after taxes)

| | 1938 | 1939 | 1940 | 1941 | 1942 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Export | $ 570,401 | $1,450,754 | $ 7,705,757 | $13,678,299 | $ 6,054,927 |
| American-Hawaiian | 590,965 | 772,992 | 922,429 | 2,756,530 | 1,719,315 |
| American President | 2,846,849[2] | 78,829 | 5,044,448 | 8,217,661 | 2,308,477 |
| Calmar | 338,317 | 829,089 | 1,732,821 | 1,742,440 | 388,413 |
| Isthmian | 1,079,115 | 1,079,805 | 3,353,502 | 5,167,887 | 2,614,357 |
| Luckenbach | 368,043 | 316,150 | 846,707 | 3,959,751 | 1,867,518 |
| Lykes Bros. | 485,671 | 1,245,281 | 6,809,866 | 12,024,786 | 8,917,639 |
| Matson | 2,146,020 | 2,315,650 | 5,372,843 | 4,753,287 | 5,883,559 |
| Shepard | 28,890 | 34,546 | 684,508 | 689,527 | 135,249 |
| Waterman | 7,803 | 59,032[1] | 2,660,948 | 3,270,731 | 761,905 |
| Weyerhaeuser | 20,835 | 173,894 | 424,132 | 353,290 | 512,518 |
| Total | $2,789,211 | $8,237,958 | $35,557,961 | $56,614,189 | $31,162,877 |

[1] Deficit
[2] Loss

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Waterman's profits were so enormous that on May 21, 1941, the company issued 10 shares of stock for each share of old stock, and in 1942 paid dividends of 16.8 percent on the new stock. It would have looked bad, in the newspapers, for the company to pay 916-percent dividends in one year to stockholders out of earnings that came from the United States Treasury.

Thus, if you held $100 worth of Waterman common in 1937, by the end of 1942 *you would have received $1,282 in dividends from the company.* Similarly, if you held $100 in American Export common in 1937, by the end of 1942 you would have received $601 in dividends.

In 1942 the government was calling on all patriotic Americans to invest their money in war bonds—paying only two percent per year.

DURING THE WAR, when industry in general was paying the highest income taxes in history, as well as a considerable excess-profits tax, the shipping companies were exempted from payment of federal taxes of any kind on the major part of their incomes.

Under the Merchant Marine Act of 1936, shipowners who receive an operating subsidy from the government may deposit any portion or all of their operating profits in a Statutory Reserve Fund that is tax-exempt if used to purchase new vessels. Another section of the 1936 Act permits non-subsidized owners to deposit all or any part of their earnings in a similarly tax-free construction fund.

The obvious purpose of these provisions was to encourage the building of modern merchant vessels in American shipyards.

In effect, however, they have permitted shipowners to escape from payment of income and excess-profits taxes, and to pile up a huge reserve from excessive wartime payments by the government which can be invested in new government war-built vessels at discount prices.

For example, let us take the case of the American Export Lines in 1941. Net profits that year, before taxes, amounted to $13,978,299. Dividends paid to stockholders—which are taxable—totaled $770,000, and *only $300,000 was set aside for federal income tax.* The financial statement of the company shows that more than $12 million went into special funds, deposits and vessels under construction.

The balances on deposit in tax-free reserve funds of 12 subsidized companies as of December 31, 1945, after four years of war, are almost double the balances of these companies on deposit December 31, 1941.

| | 1941 | 1945 |
|---|---|---|
| American Export | $14,001,957[1] | $ 16,348,295 |
| American Mail | 1,777,173 | 3,034,691 |
| American President | 5,417,296 | 20,338,753 |
| American South African | 4,948,536 | 7,493,273 |
| Grace | 10,027,103 | 11,803,946 |
| Lykes Bros. | 12,238,160 | 21,243,653 |
| Mississippi Shipping | 5,528,351 | 8,079,178 |
| Moore-McCormack | 7,932,468 | 12,479,469 |
| New York and Cuba Mail | 887,432 | 4,632,253 |
| Oceanic | 4,550,577 | 7,367,705 |
| Seas Shipping | 5,581,199 | 11,186,734 |
| United States Lines | 5,188,549 | 13,241,697 |
| | $78,078,806 | $137,552,656 |

[1] Cents deleted from all amounts.

Not shown in the 1941 balance is $95,712,714 originally deposited in these funds, which was withdrawn before 1941 by the companies to make down-payments and mortgage payments on new vessels. There are no figures available for similar withdrawals between 1941 and 1945. However, it was asserted in Congress that, in less than nine years (1937-45) these 12 companies accumulated at least $329 million in profits on which no federal taxes whatever were paid.

The 1936 Merchant Marine Act provides that ship operators who receive government subsidy are liable to a sort of excess-profits tax, which in no case shall exceed the total subsidy paid the operator, to be collected at the end of a ten-year period. To date the government can collect about $40 million from the above tax-free reserve fund, if the Maritime Commission acts under that law.

No such collection, of course, can be made from the tax-free profits deposited by non-subsidized owners in their construction fund. By December 31, 1945, the balances of these owners, on deposit with the USMC, totaled $80,446,128. Some of the larger non-subsidized balances:

| | |
|---|---|
| American-Hawaiian | $12,042,042 |
| A. H. Bull | 3,623,301 |
| Isthmian | 12,017,729 |
| Matson | 6,365,693 |
| Pope and Talbot | 4,414,997 |
| Socony Vacuum Oil | 2,709,268 |
| Standard Oil (N. J.) | 2,500,000 |
| Standard Oil of New Jersey | 2,777,078 |
| States SS. | 4,013,105 |
| Texas Co. | 10,675,122 |
| Tidewater Associated Oil | 4,546,125 |
| Weyerhaeuser | 2,469,074 |

Altogether our shipping companies, subsidized and unsubsidized, *have deposited more than $500 million in tax-free profits in construction and special reserve funds.*

This news should gladden the hearts of millions of $35-a-week workers throughout the nation, who pay from $20 to $157 out of their meager earnings every year in federal income taxes.

*This is the fifth of a series of articles by Allen Bernard. Mr. Bernard has had long experience on newspapers and magazines in New York and in Mexico City, where he was publisher of an English-language newspaper. At present a free-lance writer in New York, he has for many years been interested in the problems of the merchant marine.*

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# Chain-Reacting Liberal

*by Alfred Friendly*

At a Sunday-afternoon picnic some thirty years ago, an eight-year-old boy presented himself to the artist Willy Pogany, announced that he knew the moves of each chessman but had never played a game. Would Pogany oblige by playing with him? Pogany would and did. An hour later he was trounced. Understandably, Pogany complained to the boy's father, a prominent New York physician, that his son was a menace.

There is no doubt that the appraisal was correct. Today, as then, James R. Newman is a terrifying fellow, a sort of electrostatic generator with a potential of a million volts, likely to be set off at the slightest stimulus. The fortunate point is that when the lightning is loosed, it destroys the proper target.

Not the least remarkable aspect of Newman's remarkable career is that that career is relatively unknown, particularly to liberals, who stand deepest in his debt, for he is one of the most effective liberals now at work in the government. More recently, he became one of the half-dozen men you can thank for the victory in the Senate of the exceptionally fine McMahon bill for civilian control of atomic energy.

Newman is counsel to the Senate Special Committee on Atomic Energy. Its chairman, Brian McMahon, states simply that his contributions have been "invaluable." Working closely with the chairman, Newman did most of the drafting and authored many of the basic concepts in the civilian-control plan. Even more important, however, he carried the weight of argument in committee sessions. It was a hard-boiled, as well as a hard-working group of Senators. No idea went unchallenged; each was fought over and it was Newman who shouldered most of the battle—on both sides, as a matter of fact. At McMahon's suggestion, his counsel argued both for and against each suggestion, and the committee members reached the conclusion which everyone comes to who sees him in action—that he is the most articulate man in the Capital and has one of its most incisive and meteoric minds.

Newman drew on three of his accomplishments for the job. A lawyer by training, his work for the past several years has been as an economist, and his hobby has been the profound study of the natural sciences. Not immediately called into play were his further gifts as a historian, a mathematician and chess expert.

*Alfred Friendly has been a Washington newspaper reporter since 1936. He returned from military service last September to the staff of the Washington* Post, *where he has covered labor, economic and atomic-energy news.*

Chronologically in Newman's career, chess came first. He presumably decided at the age of eight that the game was too simple and did not play again until he was 20. Entering the field at that age was the equivalent of going in for boxing at 45, but within a year he was one of America's top-flight amateurs, an editor of the *Chess Review,* and frequently in off-hand games appeared across the board from Dr. Lasker, Capablanca, Alekhine and the giants of that era. Latterly he has dropped the game; his first bout in several years was a friendly one on a hot summer afternoon in London, in 1943, with Sir George Thomas, off-and-on British champion. Of four games played, Newman lost one, drew two and won the other. He still reads himself to sleep with chess problems and claims to be able to repeat, move for move, the end-play in hundreds of famous games, once given the set of the pieces on the board.

After getting his law degree at Columbia, Newman kept on with his hobby of advanced mathematics. He was a contributor to *Scripta Mathematica* and co-author, with Edward Kasner, Adrain Professor of Mathematics at Columbia, of the exciting and distinguished best-seller, *Mathematics and the Imagination.* In the research which went into the volume, Newman examined thousands of mathematics puzzles; a few score of them can be found in his *How to Torture Your Friends,* an infuriating book of brain-teasers.

His next book was *Tools of War,* a history of man's use and development of weapons and defense. It appeared just before the war and received its highest acclaim from persons in the War Department. He has just finished a new edition of *The Common Sense of the Exact Sciences,* by the famous British mathematician William Kingdon Clifford, whose classic work foreshadowed the relativity theory. Newman is presently compiling a 1,200-page anthology showing the relationship of mathematics to such varied fields as music, tennis, bomb-damage assessment, thermodynamics and philosophy.

Shortly after Pearl Harbor, Newman switched from a job in the office of the Undersecretary of War in favor of one with Robert Nathan on the Planning Committee of the War Production Board. Along with many jobs undertaken with Nathan, Newman also embarked on two fights of his own. One, which he lost, was a campaign to decelerate Army inductions during the early conversion-to-war-production period. It still remains for historians to decide whether it would have been wiser to keep men at their lathes

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rather than to put them into uniform, and consequently into idleness, for many months before they could be used as soldiers.

The second fight was one to rouse the Administration to take the steps needed to beat the German submarine effort. At that stage of the war, it appeared, no one had bothered to read the voluminous, untranslated official German-navy record of its U-boat activities in World War I. Newman decided it made good source material, plowed through it, revamped its lessons into modern terms, related them to present weapons and techniques and produced an exhaustive report which the Navy quickly distributed to American submarine commanders, schools and bases. It played a part, within the WPB and the Navy, in shaping the American anti-sub production program.

Through his work in Nathan's group, a few more people came to know, and be startled by, the Newman habits, techniques and disposition. Like the devices in the back room of the precinct police station, they are remarkably effective for influencing people, but are less than ideal for making friends. When embarked on a crusade, which is most of the time, Newman has about the same tolerance as Torquemada for people who fail to agree with him that the human race stands or falls upon the outcome. He is not the master that Edward Pritchard is of the cutting epigram, but he is equally bitter and much more prolific in issuing devastating judgments. These are usually in the form of analogy or metaphor, drawn from four languages and the fields of science, philosophy, literature and psychiatry. Furthermore, he seldom withholds his appraisals from the ears of their subjects. He wears his gall-bladder on his sleeve, and only Bob Allen, in his younger "Merry-Go-Round" days, could exceed Newman in the imagery and volume of his invective.

People who know him either like him very much indeed or object to him with unremitting fervor. But the dislike does not stem from any underrating of his integrity or ability. Rather, it derives from Newman's inability, or unwillingness, to curb his bluntness, or to adopt a tactful and charitable attitude toward his fellow men. Lady Astor's remark about Sidney Webb is applicable to Newman: "The trouble with Sidney is that he knows everything but doesn't realize that other people don't." Newman is by no means omniscient, but his erudition has its forbidding aspects.

Newman left the WPB for the Office of Economic Warfare, serving as second-in-command to Winfield Rieffler in London, in charge of the OEW work on bomb-damage assessment and analysis of enemy equipment. The massive, militarily significant triumphs which can be attributed to Newman and his staff constitute one of the best detective stories of the war, unfortunately still subject to secrecy regulations.

Newman returned from London in 1944 and worked as a special assistant to Undersecretary Patterson. Their relations have had a cyclical pattern: Newman stood high in Patterson's esteem following the writing of *Tools of War;* the two fought bitterly during WPB days, but became reconciled and friendly when Newman came back from London. During the recent row over atomic-energy legislation, their feuding was epic. Each has a wholesome respect for the other's capacity and honesty, but they can't stop fighting when they disagree.

When Nathan began gathering an economic staff for the Office of War Mobilization and Reconversion, Newman was one of his first recruits. He worked as Nathan's deputy in a wide variety of economic fields until the May-Johnson bill was revealed to the light of day. Newman read it and the twelfth floor of the Federal Loan Agency Building was filled with more splenetic roars than at any time since Jesse Jones vacated those corridors.

NEWMAN dropped all other work and undertook a new crusade. It is generally admitted that he, Dr. Edward U. Condon, director of the Bureau of Standards, and Dr. Leo Szilard, pioneer theoretical physicist who uncovered the possibility of the atomic bomb, are the three men responsible for stopping the May-Johnson bill. As Snyder's and the President's adviser on legislative matters dealing with science, Newman supplied the White House with the analyses and arguments which supported Mr. Truman's fine and clear-cut stand on the necessity for civilian control.

Newman was active in quarterbacking the few top scientists and the many younger workers on the atomic-bomb project who did such a splendid job in waking up the nation to the perils of short-sighted legislation on atomic energy. He was a natural for McMahon to choose as special assistant, and later as counsel, to his committee. At the same time, he continued as the White House scientific man in the OWMR.

The McMahon bill shows his handiwork on every page, and not alone in the drafting. Each of its points was one Newman fought for, argued over and sustained in the eyes of a group of Senators who all seemed to have come from Missouri and had to be shown.

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# Hollywood and Vine

## New Gadgets for the Movies

THE RULERS of our film and radio empires lag behind the engineers. As in other departments of our civilization, technology is spurting far ahead of social-political understanding. In radio, frequency modulation will soon make more smooth, and television more vivid, the commercial plugs about body odors, aches and pains, stomach gas, enlarged pores, bad breath and sluggish intestines. On the screen, new film color processes, three-dimensional projection, expansion of 16 mm. film into standard image size will provide new patterns for old formulas.

*Magical Techniques.*—Toward television the Hollywood motion-picture industry's wait-and-see attitude is changing into a ferment of active interest. Paramount has led the pack by setting up its own television corporation. Other major studios are establishing television laboratories, or subsidizing ones already established. Advancement in the technique of large-screen television projection is the lure. This opens up important possibilities in the way of new film outlets and revenues. The studios believe live shows cannot compete with film shows in mass television transmission. They rely on their resources of talent, and of production skill and experience, to dominate this field just as they have dominated other fields of visual entertainment. So they are pouring experimental millions into television.

*What About Color?*—Future films may not be finer, but they will certainly be more flamboyant. Look for increasing gobs of color. New processes will compete with Technicolor, Inc., and absorb the huge backlog of demand. The most important new color technique is Agfa, the German process. The U. S. Department of Justice is now moving to release the Agfa (I. G. Farben) color patents for American use. The process is cheaper and faster than Technicolor. . . . Other color processes are coming up fast—Magnacolor, Cinecolor and several more. You may soon be using color film in your box Brownie, and having it developed at the drugstore.

*Third Dimension.*—Our two-dimension movies are on the way out. They will be made obsolescent by pictures that have depth as well as length and breadth. So the old technique of the stereopticon pictures you looked at through a double glass in your grandmother's parlor will be modified and modernized for the motion-picture screen. For years Hollywood has been interested in this possibility. This interest was sharply intensified the other day with the authentic information that Sergei Ivanov, the Russian film inventor and producer, has perfected a three-dimensional process and is filming *Robinson Crusoe* in color and depth. The Russian process uses special projectors and a cellular glass screen. The American process, now said to be perfected, will combine the stereoscopic patents with a new application of radar electronics. The Selznick-International interests are said to be in on the ground floor. . . . When Dr. James Shotwell of Columbia University was in Hollywood a few months ago, he said wistfully: "We have had the moving picture, the talking picture, the color picture. Will the thinking picture be next?" No, Doctor, the depth picture will be next. It may lack something in intellectual stimulus. But think what it will do for Betty Grable.

*Millimeter Revolution.*—Some exhibitors along Hollywood Boulevard have been demonstrating how to make big pictures out of little ones. They take a 16-mm. film, run it through a special projector hypoed with high arcs, and the image on the screen is comparable in size and sharpness with that of a standard 35-mm. film. This is potentially important. It has created new interest in 16-mm. production, which is much cheaper and simpler than 35-mm. production.

*Atomic to Anatomic.*—A while ago Hollywood interest was centered in atomic films. Fission was in fashion. But now interest has shifted to the anatomic. Howard Hughes's over-touted picture, "The Outlaw," and its advertising provided the kick-off for the controversy. How graphic can a movie advertisement be without being pornographic? Who among the lady stars wears falsies? Is one of these stars just indulging in a publicity gag in attacking a news magazine because it said she wore them? These questions agitate Hollywood, major source of entertainment and uplift for 80 million Americans each week. . . . But behind these trivia, work on the nuclear-physics pictures goes ahead. MGM's "The Beginning or the End" promises to be a film of some integrity and meaning. Paramount has a new atom-bomb picture on its schedule, "The End of the World." Howard Koch is writing the script, and that means the film will be an adult job. He has been working closely with the Federation of American Scientists, very active here under the sane guidance of Dr. J. Robert Oppenheimer of Pasadena.

*Toast to Hollywood.*—Konstantin Simonov, the Soviet novelist, poet and war correspondent, spent some time in Hollywood, where his Stalingrad picture, "Days and Nights," was premiered by the Hollywood Writers' Mobilization. Coming as the guest of the State Department and the Newspaper Editors' Association, he was taken in tow by the local very important persons, and was the honored victim at many parties and conferences. At one party Simonov proposed a toast in vodka to Hollywood. "No," somebody said, "let's drink to heroic Stalingrad." "I'll tell you why I don't think that's a good idea," said Simonov. "Stalingrad is what you call okay. It is doing all right. But I think Hollywood needs encouragement. It needs sympathy." They drank to Hollywood. . . . But Hollywood can do all right too, sometimes. It did all right with the film version of Lillian Hellman's "The Searching Wind," which begins with the words of FDR on Yalta: "Twenty-five years ago American fighting men looked to the statesmen of the world to finish the work of peace. We failed them. We cannot fail them again, and expect the world again to recover."

*Hollywood* S. V. R.

*This department, reporting the news of Hollywood, will appear in the* New Republic *at frequent intervals.*—THE EDITORS

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# The Bandwagon

Secretary of State Byrnes today denied that the U. S. and Britain have formed a bloc to intimidate Russia. . . .—*AP dispatch from Washington.*

The United States granted a $1,370 million reconstruction loan to France today . . . in a far-reaching accord that promised to rebuild the French republic as a bulwark against the westward march of communism.—*UP dispatch from Washington. Both printed in the Boston* Globe, *same day, same page.*

Turning to the Negro problem in this country she [Lady Astor] suggested that the race situation will never find its complete solution until Negroes "serve God first." She told the student body that the "happiest" and "most prosperous" person she has met in this country was the colored porter who carried her baggage on the train to Miami. "He was not just carrying baggage. He was carrying something much bigger. He was a living fire," she declared.—*From the Washington* Post.

But why remove all control from rents, Mr. Barnard [Boyd T. Barnard, president of the National Association of Real Estate Boards] was asked. Would it not be more reasonable to allow limited rent increases, retaining ceilings but placing them at higher levels until supply comes somewhere nearer demand?

Mr. Barnard replied that such a course might have been taken earlier, but now it is not politically feasible. It would call for legislative action, and what representative would want to go back to his constituents and tell them he had voted to increase their rent? However, if he voted to end all price control, rents included, he could defend his position on the ground that he was voting for a return to an entirely free economy.—*From the* Christian Science Monitor.

### The American Scene

GriGri is pronounced Gree Gree, and sounds a bit like the love call of a lonely little cricket lost in the ecstatic contemplation of a dew drop. . . . We created GriGri because it will replace nicely the block-buster and robot bomb; because someone may write soon again a "What Price Glory" show and because we dream that eventually Eve may remember to whisper again, "yours . . . very . . . truly."—*From a Bonwit Teller perfume advertisement in the Philadelphia* Inquirer.

### You Don't Mean Old Magna Charlie?

Like most of his fellow Newporters, Larry will admit (after very little coaxing) that he is also a direct descendant of a famous English figure. In Larry's case it's Charlemagne, whose name he tosses into conversations with that elaborately casual air.—*From Charles Ventura's column in the New York* World-Telegram.

*Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of the* New Republic. *Please enclose the original clipping.*—THE EDITORS

# Correspondence

### Schuman and Kravchenko

SIR: Professor Schuman in his review of *I Chose Freedom* (the *New Republic*, May 6) has adopted the technique of a shyster lawyer who, with a bad case, abuses the character of his opponent.

The burden of the abuse is that Kravchenko is a renegade, the reviewer forgetting that so is everyone who writes the history of his own desertion of a creed or a party, and that it has not hitherto been an axiom of criticism that a book written by a renegade cannot be literature or history or an autobiography of merit. In fact there are many apologies for apostasy that rank among the great books of humanity and cannot be disposed of by calling the author a traitor. This has been tried before and seems to be standard practice with pro-Soviet reviewers dealing with the few books by former Communists that escape censorship by pickax.

In treating of the book itself, the reviewer seems to be of three minds about the correctness of the portrait of Russia therein painted. First, it is not a true portrait because it is like the picture the *Daily Worker* draws of the United States—a "true" picture but utterly misleading because incomplete. Here the reviewer fails to point out that the "police spies, poverty, bungling, brutality, oppression and misery" of the USSR, which he admits exist, are instruments of state policy, means adopted by the dictator to achieve his ends, while no one has yet claimed that our Presidents purposely plan to keep "strikers, demagogues, gangsters, racketeers, illiterates and lynching mobs" as a part of the apparatus of government. Second, he appears to believe that Kravchenko's recital of horrors is true, that it is more than matched by Stalin's own accounts and Zhdanov's lengthy report, and that many of the innumerable blunders and crimes of Soviet collectivization and industrialization were more shocking than Kravchenko's own experiences. And finally, he has a half-hearted parenthesis implying that the whole thing is fictitious. Of this he presents no evidence, and with the admissions he has made in the first and second stage of his analysis we may assume that he believes that Kravchenko's picture of Russia is essentially correct, if, indeed, not underdrawn.

What, then, is the vice in the book? The real tragedy, says the reviewer, is that Kravchenko could not see the forest because of the trees, could not realize that the evil means used by the Soviet were justified by the ends and resulted in building the foundation of Soviet power and the expectation of a life of ultimate abundance and freedom for the Soviet peoples.

Of course this is merely expressing a difference of opinion without telling the reasons for the difference. Both author and reviewer agree that the means—crimes, abuses, horrors—were evil. Both agree that at least two of the ends—a life of ultimate abundance and freedom—are not yet achieved. The reviewer believes that they are expectations, perhaps just around the corner, and that the horrible means will then be fully justified. The author presents a powerful case to the contrary. He shows that the lot of the Russian, as to living and liberty both, is worse than it was under the czars and that the means will not accomplish the desired ends. He admits that Russia was powerful in the war but he proves to the satisfaction of many readers that Russian success in the war was not a Soviet but a Russian miracle, the result of a mighty surge of patriotism coming from profound depths to rescue the faltering Soviet military economy.

The author may not have proved his case, but he has made a powerful presentation of it and it is unfair to brush it aside with

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a metaphor about the forest and the trees and a statement that one does not expect from deserters any honest acknowledgment of the relationship between ends and means.

Kravchenko, who is still, I think, a Communist and a revolutionary, would probably accept the casuist's maxim that where the ends are licit the means are licit. At least I do not find him making the argument which a democrat would—that in the search for freedom the means are more important than the ends. The Woodrow Wilson Professor of History at Williams College could, I am sure, multiply examples of this. Crime must be punished; but even at the expense of justice in the particular case, no man may be deprived of life or liberty without a fair trial and due process. Government must survive, but even a traitor may not be punished if the evidence against him has been obtained by an illegal search. In a free country, the kulak's rights are more important than the dictator's purposes. Freedom does not come by non-freedom; it is not a gift from tyrants.

The most significant omission in the review is the failure even to mention Stalin's contribution to the cause of fascism by his pact with Hitler and his supply of goods to the Nazi cause. This was in the mind of the reviewer doubtless another means, evil in itself, which was to result in a desirable end. Most apologists for the pact claim that it was made to give Stalin time to prepare for Hitler's inevitable treachery. If so, and the book contains much evidence to the contrary, the time was not used and, as Kravchenko proves, Russia was caught unprepared. This aid to Hitler, going far beyond the passive appeasement of Chamberlain, and this criminal unpreparedness are the most damning indictments in the book. The reviewer says nothing about them while he strives to convict the author of ingratitude, indecision and petty peccadilloes.

It is also hard to believe that Professor Schuman really doubts the sincerity, if not the validity, of the author's conclusion that world organization for peace will fail unless the Russian people, whom the author loves and admires, have achieved the fundamental freedoms. The book teaches and many will believe that until that achievement is won, in fact as well as in hypocritical constitutional provision, the United Nations will be dealing, not with a great and admirable and trustworthy people but with a brutal oligarchy, a gang as unreliable as Hitler's and more tyrannical than the czars. This, as Dorothy Thompson has written, is hard to answer, and your reviewer has not done so by his wisecracks and his name-calling.

*Boston, Mass.* ROBERT H. MONTGOMERY

Several other readers have commented on Mr. Schuman's review, but space permits us to print only part of their letters.

Dr. Walter W. Marseille of Detroit says that Mr. Schuman does not disagree with Mr. Kravchenko's facts, and that the reviewer "begs the whole question of Kravchenko's book" by the assumption that victory in the war and the promise of abundance were worth the repressions of the Soviet government, or that these repressions were necessary to ensure that victory.

Mr. Robert J. King of San Francisco objects that it is not proved that "only a sovietized Russia could have resisted the fascist powers," in the face of the showing made by the liberal democracies in the war.

Rabbi Theodore Lewis of New York City writes that *I Chose Freedom* . . . "is no more fiction than were those volumes which described the Nazi terror," and that understanding between Russia and the West requires that the Russians allow free travel, an uncensored press and the circulation of foreign-language newspapers in Russia.

Professor Schuman writes: "Adequate comment on these letters would require a detailed restatement of all the facts of Soviet life which make Kravchenko's volume a travesty on truth. The character of witnesses is always germane to an evaluation of their testimony. Kravchenko, as Walter Kerr has said in the New York *Herald Tribune*, is 'the man who deserted his post two months before D-Day.' His publishers and anonymous editors have obviously done an effective job of ensnaring the gullible, misleading the ignorant and inspiring the Russophobes to new efforts in their current campaign of calumny and hate-mongering. In *Soviet Politics*, published by Alfred A. Knopf and reviewed in the *New Republic* of February 11, I have attempted to set forth the facts, with full documentation, and to draw reasoned conclusions from them. Lest Mr. Montgomery assume that this is a 'party-line' apologia, it should be noted that the *New Masses* has characterized much of the work as 'unmitigated nonsense' and 'rubbish.' The book deals in detail with almost all the points raised above. I trust I may be permitted to commend it to those interested in realities rather than in fictions and slanders."

## Progressives and Communists

SIR: James Loeb's letter in your issue of May 13[1] on cooperation between liberals and Communists raises one question not clearly answered. That question is one of common honesty, created by the denial of Communist identity in a score of party-run enterprises.

Coöperation with admitted Communists is morally defensible in any cause where their zeal and energy appear useful. Cooperation with concealed Communists who deny their identity and loyalty, and in a movement they control, creates a morally indefensible alliance. It rests on deception. Yet it is the common pattern of Communist operations in liberal circles. Their small numbers combined with their unpopularity have developed a genius for manipulating concealed control.

This characteristic dishonesty snares scores of liberals who desire to serve only the professed objects of public movements. But they lend their influence to what in effect are the ulterior purposes of the Communist Party program and directly or indirectly the interests of the USSR. These misalliances create confusion in the public mind, arouse attack by reactionaries on legitimate objectives and weaken the causes they profess to serve.

Liberals would advance their own purposes by restricting coöperation to movements whose non-partisanship is clearly established. When caught by inability to penetrate the skillful disguises presented, withdrawal is the obvious course. To remain on the ground that the cause would suffer by disruption, or that its worth justifies overlooking Communist control, is to condone the basic dishonesty of its claim to non-partisanship.

I commend to others a policy resulting from a long personal experience with Communist operations. (1) Coöperate with admitted Communists in those public movements where partisan participation appears desirable. (2) Contribute to agencies under their control, even when not so admitted, when they are doing a useful public service not inconsistent with liberal objectives. (3) Defend the rights, whether of admitted or concealed Communists, but reserve the right in so doing to characterize accurately their loyalties. This is not red-baiting. (4) But resist being a party to public deception by joining or sponsoring the committees, meetings, petitions and protests of agencies known or suspected to be under Communist control while professing a disinterested public service.

Much of the dilemma posed by Mr. Loeb would disappear with a clear-cut recognition of the moral distinctions involved between open and camouflaged Communist operations. Such distinctions contribute to honesty, prevent confusion, and yet do not deny aid to legitimate public objectives.

*New York City* ROGER N. BALDWIN

[1] James Loeb Jr., national director of the Union for Democratic Action, argued in a letter in our May 13 issue, that progressives should not coöperate, in an organizational way, with Communists. —THE EDITORS

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# Politics and the English Language[1]

MOST PEOPLE who bother with the matter at all would admit that the English language is in a bad way, but it is generally assumed that we cannot by conscious action do anything about it. Our civilization is decadent, and our language—so the argument runs—must inevitably share in the general collapse. It follows that any struggle against the abuse of language is a sentimental archaism, like preferring candles to electric light or hansom cabs to airplanes. Underneath this lies the half-conscious belief that language is a natural growth and not an instrument which we shape for our own purposes.

Now, it is clear that the decline of a language must ultimately have political and economic causes: it is not due simply to the bad influence of this or that individual writer. But an effect can become a cause, reinforcing the original cause and producing the same effect in an intensified form, and so on indefinitely. The point is that the process is reversible. Modern English, especially written English, is full of bad habits which spread by imitation and which can be avoided if one is willing to take the necessary trouble. If one gets rid of these habits one can think more clearly, and to think clearly is a necessary first step toward political regeneration: so that the fight against bad English is not frivolous and is not the exclusive concern of professional writers. I will come back to this presently, and I hope that by that time the meaning of what I have said here will have become clearer. Meanwhile, here are four specimens of the English language as it is now habitually written.

These passages have not been picked out because they are especially bad—I could have quoted far worse if I had chosen—but because they illustrate various of the mental vices from which we now suffer. They are a little below the average, but are fairly representative samples. I number them so that I can refer back to them when necessary:

(1) I am not, indeed, sure whether it is not true to say that the Milton who once seemed not unlike a seventeenth-century Shelley had not become, out of an experience ever more bitter in each year, more alien (*sic*) to the founder of that Jesuit sect which nothing could induce him to tolerate.

Professor Harold Laski (Essay in *Freedom of Expression*).

(2) Above all, we cannot play ducks and drakes with a native battery of idioms which prescribes such egregious collocations of vocables as the Basic *put up with* for *tolerate* or *put at a loss* for *bewilder*.

Professor Lancelot Hogben (*Interglossa*).

(3) On the one side we have the free personality: by definition it is not neurotic, for it has neither conflict nor dream. Its desires, such as they are, are transparent, for they are just what institutional approval keeps in the forefront of consciousness; another institutional pattern would alter their number and intensity; there is little in them that is natural, irreducible, or culturally dangerous. But *on the other side*, the social bond itself is nothing but the mutual reflection of these self-secure integrities. Recall the definition of love. Is not this the very picture of a small academic? Where is there a place in this hall of mirrors for either personality or fraternity?

Essay on psychology in *Politics* (New York).

(4) All the "best people" from the gentlemen's clubs, and all the frantic fascist captains, united in common hatred of socialism and bestial horror of the rising tide of the mass revolutionary movement, have turned to acts of provocation, to foul incendiarism, to medieval legends of poisoned wells, to legalize their own destruction of proletarian organizations, and rouse the agitated petty-bourgeoisie to chauvinistic fervor on behalf of the fight against the revolutionary way out of the crisis.

Communist pamphlet.

Each of these passages has faults of its own, but quite apart from avoidable ugliness, two qualities are common to all of them. The first is staleness of imagery; the other is lack of precision. The writer either has a meaning and cannot express it, or he inadvertently says something else, or he is almost indifferent as to whether his words mean anything or not. This mixture of vagueness and sheer incompetence is the most marked characteristic of modern English prose, and especially of any kind of political writing. As soon as certain topics are raised, the concrete melts into the abstract and no one seems able to think of turns of speech that are not hackneyed: prose consists less and less of *words* chosen for the sake of their meaning, and more and more of *phrases* tacked together like the sections of a prefabricated hen-house. I list below various of the tricks by means of which the work of prose-construction is habitually dodged:

*Dying metaphors.*—A newly invented metaphor assists thought by evoking a visual image, while on the other hand a metaphor which is technically "dead" (e.g., *iron resolution*) has in effect reverted to being an ordinary word and can generally be used without loss of vividness. But in between these two classes there is a huge dump of worn-out metaphors which have lost all evocative power and are merely used because they save people the trouble of inventing phrases for themselves. Examples are: *Ring the changes on, take up the cudgels for, toe the line, ride roughshod over, stand shoulder to shoulder with, play into the hands of, no axe to grind, grist to the mill, fishing in troubled waters, Achilles' heel, swan song, hotbed.* Many of these are used without knowledge of their meaning (what is a "rift," for instance?), and incompatible metaphors are frequently mixed, a sure sign that the writer is not interested in what he is saying.

*Operators, or verbal false limbs.*—These save the trouble of picking out appropriate verbs and nouns, and at the same time pad each sentence with extra syllables which give it an appearance of symmetry. Characteristic phrases are: *render inoperative, militate against, prove unacceptable, make contact with, be subjected to, give rise to, give grounds for, have the effect of, play a leading part (role) in, make itself felt, serve the purpose of,* etc., etc. The keynote is the elimination of simple verbs. Instead of being a single word, such as *break, stop, spoil, mend, kill,* a verb becomes a *phrase*, made up of a noun or adjective tacked on to some general-purposes verb such as *prove, serve, form, play, render*. In addition, the passive voice is wherever possible used in preference to the active, and noun constructions are used instead of gerunds (*by examination of* instead of *by examining*). The range of verbs is further cut down by means of the *-ize* and *de-* formations, and banal statements are given an appearance of profundity by means of the *not*

[1] This is the first section of a two-part article by Mr. Orwell. It will conclude in our issue of June 24.—THE EDITORS

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*un-* formation. Simple conjunctions and prepositions are replaced by such phrases as *with respect to, the fact that, in view of, in the interests of, on the hypothesis that*; and the ends of sentences are saved from anti-climax by such resounding commonplaces as *greatly to be desired, cannot be left out of account, a development to be expected in the near future, deserving of serious consideration, brought to a satisfactory conclusion*, etc.

*Pretentious diction.* – Words like *phenomenon, element, individual* (as noun), *objective, categorical, effective, virtual, basic, primary, constitute, exhibit, exploit, utilize, eliminate, liquidate*, are used to dress up simple statement and give an air of scientific impartiality to biased judgments. Adjectives like *epoch-making, epic, historic, unforgettable, triumphant, inevitable, inexorable, veritable*, are used to dignify the sordid processes of international politics, while writing that aims at glorifying war usually takes on an archaic color, its characteristic words being: *realm, throne, chariot, trident, sword, shield, banner, jackboot, clarion.* Foreign words and expressions such as *cul de sac, ancien régime, deus ex machina, status quo, gleichschaltung, weltanschauung*, are used to give an air of culture and elegance. Except for the useful abbreviations *i.e., e.g.* and *etc.*, there is no real need for any of the hundreds of foreign phrases now current in English. Bad writers, and especially scientific, political and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones, and unnecessary words like *expedite, ameliorate, predict, extraneous, clandestine, subaqueous* and hundreds of others constantly gain ground from their Anglo-Saxon opposite numbers. The jargon peculiar to Marxist writing (*hyena, hangman, cannibal, petty bourgeois, lackeys, flunkey, mad dog, White Guard*, etc.) consists largely of words and phrases translated from Russian, German or French; but the normal way of coining a new word is to use a Latin or Greek root with the appropriate affix and, where necessary, the *-ize* formation. It is often easier to make up words of this kind (*deregionalize, impermissible, extramarital, non-fragmentatory*) than to think up the English words that will cover one's meaning. The result, in general, is an increase in slovenliness and vagueness.

*Meaningless words.* – In certain kinds of writing, particularly in art criticism and literary criticism, it is normal to come across long passages which are almost completely lacking in meaning. Words like *romantic, plastic, values, human, dead, sentimental, natural, vitality*, as used in art criticism, are strictly meaningless, in the sense that they not only do not point to any discoverable object, but are hardly even expected to do so by the reader. When one critic writes, "The outstanding feature of Mr. X's work is its living quality," while another writes, "The immediately striking thing about Mr. X's work is its peculiar deadness," the reader accepts this as a simple difference of opinion. If words like *black* and *white* were involved, instead of the jargon words *dead* and *living*, he would see at once that language was being used in an improper way. Many political words are similarly abused. The word *fascism* has now no meaning except in so far as it signifies "something not desirable." The words *democracy, socialism, freedom, patriotic, realistic, justice*, have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with one another. In the case of a word like *democracy*, not only is there no agreed definition, but the attempt to make one is resisted from all sides. It is almost universally felt that when we call a country democratic we are praising it: consequently the defenders of every kind of regime claim that it is a democracy, and fear that they might have to stop using the word if it were tied down to any one meaning. Words of this kind are often used in a consciously dishonest way. That is, the person who uses them has his own private definition, but allows his hearer to think he means something quite different. Statements like *Marshal Pétain was a true patriot, The Soviet Press is the freest in the world, The Catholic Church is opposed to persecution*, are almost always made with the intent to deceive. Others words used in variable meanings, in most cases more or less dishonestly, are: *class, totalitarian, science, progressive, reactionary, bourgeois, equality*.

Now that I have made this catalogue of swindles and perversions, let me give another example of the kind of writing that they lead to. This time it must of its nature be an imaginary one. I am going to translate a passage of good English into modern English of the worst sort. Here is a well known verse from "Ecclesiastes":

> I returned, and saw under the sun, that the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong, neither yet bread to the wise, nor yet riches to men of understanding, nor yet favor to men of skill; but time and chance happeneth to them all.

Here it is in modern English:

> Objective consideration of contemporary phenomena compels the conclusion that success or failure in competitive activities exhibits no tendency to be commensurate with innate capacity, but that a considerable element of the unpredictable must invariably be taken into account.

This is a parody, but not a very gross one. Exhibit (3), on page 872, for instance, contains several patches of the same kind of English. It will be seen that I have not made a full translation. The beginning and ending of the sentence follow the original meaning fairly closely, but in the middle the concrete illustrations—race, battle, bread—dissolve into the vague phrase "success or failure in competitive activities." This had to be so, because no modern writer of the kind I am discussing—no one capable of using phrases like "objective consideration of contemporary phenomena"—would ever tabulate his thoughts in that precise and detailed way. The whole tendency of modern prose is away from concreteness.

As I have tried to show, modern writing at its worst does not consist in picking out words for the sake of their meaning and inventing images in order to make the meaning clearer. It consists in gumming together long strips of words which have already been set in order by someone else, and making the results presentable by sheer humbug. The attraction of this way of writing is that it is easy. It is easier —even quicker, once you have the habit—to say *In my opinion it is a not unjustifiable assumption that* than to say *I think*. When you are composing in a hurry—when you are dictating to a stenographer, for instance, or making a public speech—it is natural to fall into a pretentious, Latinized style. Tags like *a consideration which we should do*

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*well to bear in mind* or *a conclusion to which all of us would readily assent* will save many a sentence from coming down with a bump. By using stale metaphors, similes and idioms, you save much mental effort, at the cost of leaving your meaning vague, not only for your reader but for yourself. This is the significance of mixed metaphors. The sole aim of a metaphor is to call up a visual image. When these images clash—as in *The Fascist octopus has sung its swan song, the jackboot is thrown into the melting pot*—it can be taken as certain that the writer is not seeing a mental image of the objects he is naming; in other words he is not really thinking. Look again at the examples I gave at the beginning of this essay. Professor Laski (1) uses five negatives in 53 words. One of these is superfluous, making nonsense of the whole passage, and in addition there is the [printer's] slip *alien* for akin, making further nonsense, and several avoidable pieces of clumsiness which increase the general vagueness. Professor Hogben (2) plays ducks and drakes with a battery which is able to write prescriptions, and while disapproving of the everyday phrase *put up with*, is unwilling to look *egregious* up in the dictionary and see what it means. (3), if one takes an uncharitable attitude toward it, is simply meaningless: probably one could work out its intended meaning by reading the whole of the article in which it occurs. In (4), the writer knows more or less what he wants to say, but an accumulation of stale phrases chokes him like tea leaves blocking a sink. People who write in this manner usually have a general emotional meaning—they dislike one thing and want to express solidarity with another—but they are not interested in the detail of what they are saying. A scrupulous writer, in every sentence that he writes, will ask himself at least four questions, thus: What am I trying to say? What words will express it? What image or idiom will make it clearer? Is this image fresh enough to have an effect? And he will probably ask himself two more: Could I put it more shortly? Have I said anything that is avoidably ugly? But you are not obliged to go to all this trouble. You can shirk it by simply throwing your mind open and letting the ready-made phrases come crowding in. They will construct your sentences for you—even think your thoughts for you, to a certain extent—and at need they will perform the important service of partially concealing your meaning even from yourself. It is at this point that the special connection between politics and the debasement of language becomes clear.

GEORGE ORWELL

# Books in Review

## Behind the Hucksters

ALL THE COMFORTS OF HOME, says the bellboy as he ushers the American guest into his hotel room, and ends his display of its charms by turning on the inevitable radio with Choice of Two Stations. Radio running like water. As American as chewing gum. Fifty-five million sets bringing whatever goes into the microphone right into most every American home—a guest come to stay. An industry Babbitt could be proud of, though it's hardly out of its teens. Over eighty million dollars' worth of networks and stations. Advertisers spending $400 million a year in eager competition to be on the air. Listeners spending over a half billion a year to keep up and replace a two-billion-dollar investment in receiving sets. It's Big Business. In 1944 the industry—networks and stations lumped together—made a 222.6-percent return on the depreciated value of its property. That's net return, before taxes. What more could you want?

The Federal Communications Commission, in a report on the Public Service Responsibilities of Radio, says we should want and get a lot more. Charles Siepmann had a lot to do with writing that report, and has added provocative argument to official statistics in his book, *Radio's Second Chance*.[1] The storm of argument and protest is swirling round the industry.

Siepmann concentrates on what he sees wrong with radio. True, he starts from the premise that the American commercial system of running radio is basically sound, much of the output good, some of it the best in the world. But with that brief bow to good work, he asks, Is it good enough for an America newly emerging as a world power, whose people are running a race against time in which intelligence and understanding alone can save us? Is radio helping us to win?

And the public, he reckons, has a right to ask the question, not merely because it listens. The public owns the air. On behalf of the public, the FCC merely grants broadcasters temporary licenses to use specific air waves. Every three years each license has to be renewed. The FCC is prohibited by act of Congress from censoring what goes on the air. But in deciding who shall have a license to broadcast, it is instructed to satisfy itself that a licensee operates in "the public interest, convenience or necessity."

There's fierce legal argument over just what powers that gives the FCC. The FCC and Siepmann say the public interest is not served unless listeners get five general types of program in each of the three main sections of the day—morning, afternoon and evening. The five are: news; entertainment; programs on national and international issues; programs of interest to large and important sections of the community, such as farmers or children; programs for significant cultural minorities (lovers of music or literature, for example). And the FCC and Siepmann insist that stations should pay serious attention to the life of their local communities and search out local talent.

Only for news and entertainment programs do they award high marks for present performance. They marshal statistics to show that local stations are more and more neglecting local interests for network programs, are playing more and more recorded music and cramming in as many

[1] Radio's Second Chance, by Charles A. Siepmann. Boston: Little, Brown and Company. 282 pages. $2.50.

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commercial spot-announcements as they can get away with.

Siepmann charges that the networks in turn have abdicated control over many programs in favor of the advertisers. CBS, for instance, in 1944 got 38 percent of its revenue through only four advertising agencies, and just four advertisers provided 26 percent of its revenue. And the advertising agencies' attitude is simple. As the head of the Duane Jones advertising company put it: "No program can long endure that does not sell goods." Or a broadcasting official: "Are we to be guided by what a few of you intellectuals think? Our surveys show that the public want these singing commercials." And last year the president of the National Association of Broadcasters indignantly brushed aside all high-hat talk of radio as a cultural influence and ranked radio along with the business of selling and merchandising washing machines. Siepmann complains that even when the networks attempt to balance the listening diet by producing their own sustaining public-service programs, they offer them at inconvenient times and the programs are not carried by many of the affiliated stations.

That's Siepmann's picture of what he calls "A trust betrayed in favor of a fortune." He looks for remedies in several directions. He believes that the FCC should stop evading the responsibilities it claims for itself. For all its fine talk about public service, the FCC has renewed practically every license, no matter how blatantly the station has neglected public service for profits. For all its talk of the public owning the air, the FCC steadily approves transfer of licenses at prices which can be justified only as payment for the right to use the air, a right which is supposed to belong to the people. Siepmann believes that if the FCC applied its own principles in one or two cases the shock might provoke a healthy reaction in the industry. If the FCC's powers are in dispute, let them be tested by court action on a test case.

Siepmann looks to the networks and the stations to take a bigger view of their responsibilities, and aim a little higher than just to sell goods. And he hopes they will be stimulated by some strong competition from the large number of new FM stations which are now being licensed. That competition is what he has in mind when he speaks of "Radio's Second Chance."

Most of all he puts the responsibility on the listeners themselves. If they take what they get lying down, that's all they will get. If they want something else and make themselves heard, they will get results. But the listeners are unorganized and inarticulate. Siepmann urges them to form Radio Listeners' Councils in every community, to spread information about radio, about who decides what goes on the air and who pays for it, and discuss whether we are getting the service we are entitled to. And equally important, these Radio Listeners' Councils are to bring to the radio stations the views of the listeners.

That's an interesting conclusion because it puts the responsibility for improvement exactly where it is placed by those who disagree completely with his whole argument. For example, Henry Morgan argues in the New York *Times* that you, the listener, are what is wrong with radio. If you won't listen to better programs, what's the sense in producing them? There's only so much time in a day, and in each section of it the stations are anxious to collect the biggest listening audience. If ten listeners want Sinatra to


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every one who wants to hear public issues, the ten win out.

Some broadcasters claim that they are already serving up as many public-service programs as the traffic will bear. They rationalize their view by saying that radio can no more make America over than a cultural revolution can be started in the public schools. Radio, like any other nation-wide activity, merely mirrors the state of the nation.

Siepmann's reply would be that this is a short-sighted view. He would have radio eagerly searching out new ways of developing public interest and understanding instead of merely shrugging its shoulders and saying leave that to the highbrows. He would have radio spend as much money and energy and brain power on making the important questions interesting as it now spends on finding new ways of selling goods. By the selling standard, the ideal listener is the moron who soaks up all the advertising and goes right out to buy everything he's told to. Siepmann maintains that to concentrate on the moron is just bad business. It's reaping a quick profit instead of cultivating a lasting support. In the end it will kill the goose that lays the golden eggs. An argument which will carry weight with the radio industry the moment the goose shows signs of laying no more golden eggs.

DAVID WILLS

# The World's Sorrow

*Anguish, by Graciliano Ramos. Translated by L. C. Kaplan. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 256 pages. $2.50.*

It is a rather terrifying fact that, currently, the fiction which moves us most is concerned with man self-destroyed or man desperately attempting to establish his own sanity. This accounts, perhaps, for the particularly disturbing quality of Graciliano Ramos' novel, *Anguish*. For, although this is a tale of an obscure clerk and journalist in a provincial Brazilian town, the soul state so vividly dramatized is something we all feel to a greater or lesser degree: it is the utter alienation of modern man from fundamental values, the "angoisse" of the existentialists, a choking rage at the dirty joke which the creature that used to be called "the lord of creation" has played on himself.

Ramos' hero, Luis da Silva, typifies specifically the frustrated Latin American intellectual. Author of two hundred unpublished sonnets, he dreams continually of the books he will never write and, instead, turns out articles for a corrupt press, articles defending or praising crooked politicians. He is always hard up, always bitter at the fat capitalists who plunder the country, yet he does nothing about it except chat with the revolutionaries in the café. He dreams of marrying the sensual little gold-digger, Marina, who lives next door, but loses her when she is made pregnant by a wealthy playboy.

Now it is a fact that the middle class in the Latin American republics is too small to support its intelligentsia. Even the most important writers cannot live from their books and, unless they are translated and published in other countries, they scarcely feel they are being read at all. The typical intellectual is therefore compelled, like da Silva, to make up to the party in power in order to obtain some small sinecure and, since this is never enough to live on, he must also dissipate himself in meretricious journalism. He lives in a limited, provincial atmosphere and his familiarity with European culture only intensifies his dissatisfaction with his poverty-stricken environment. When one adds to this the fact that Brazil has been controlled by a repressive dictatorship for years, it is easy to see why the weak and embittered intellectual of the novel feels precisely like a cornered rat.

Da Silva tells his own story backward. In the beginning he informs us that it is only a month since he got out of bed, and by a kind of thematic repetition, plunging each time a little deeper into the action, he carries us back into the tightening net of hysteria and nervous exacerbation which results in his breakdown. The affair with Marina was simply the immediate cause. There is a kind of perversion, a figurative impotence, running through his relationship with her and his attempts to sleep with her while they are engaged. When Juliano Tavares seduces Marina and leaves her, Luis' resentment acquires symbolical quality. He does not hate Tavares because he has harmed Marina (love has already turned to sadistic dislike) but because Tavares' success is an affront to himself, underlining the impotence and insignificance of his whole life, symbolizing what the world has done to him. Thus it is, as his world grows more distorted, that a fixation upon Tavares develops which ends in a meaningless murder and a descent into real madness.

Ramos' style and method are original. There is a hypersensitivity to detail which creates a sense of distance and fantasy within reality. "His voice made me shudder; it reminded me of something fat, white and spongy, like raw pork." The musical repetition of certain images from his childhood accentuates the meanness of the present, for da Silva is descended from the rancher, Trajano, a lusty frontiersman to whom life did not present the same problems it does to his grandson. It is also made clear that Luis suffers from a traumatic hatred for his father. As his spirit engages in a shadowy battle with perception, its evasions and compensations grow more and more symbolical, and, as the details of his daily life, the familiar inhabitants of his street hem him in, they acquire a mysterious menace.

In other words, something of what Kafka achieves by subtly altering life into a fantastic dream, Ramos manages to suggest by exaggerations of reality just as a microscope, by revealing invisible textures, turns the housefly into a monster and woolen thread into a forest.

The average writer who attempts to tell a story by piling up sensory material achieves only triviality; it takes a poet to create an effect of lyrical terror from the rubbish accumulated by the trash basket of the human mind. In the last analysis Ramos is a poet and this is why his book achieves importance through intensity and—although the details of the hero's life are alien to us—we cannot remain unmoved by his desperation.

Hitherto we have had no fiction from Brazil which reflected the contemporary political situation, even though that country was one of the earliest to adopt some form of totalitarianism. Señor Ramos' book suggests that stagnation rather than successful regimentation has resulted. By indirect ideological allusion and by means of a single limited character he has written an agonized indictment of life in his own country and at the same time he has created a work of literature which reflects the anguish of the entire world.

H. R. HAYS

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# The Atom and World Policy

*The Absolute Weapon: Atomic Power and World Order, edited by Bernard Brodie. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 214 pages. $2.*

So MANY BOOKS about the atomic bomb and its consequences have already been rushed into print that readers may begin to tire of the subject. What has been said—and for the most part well said—is, however, only the beginning of what ought to be a long discussion, the end of which we cannot yet see. The scientists have described the weapon, its probable effects and the changes it is likely to make in warfare. They have not been able to go very far into changes in human institutions which will be necessary for its control.

This new book—a product of the Yale Institute of International studies—is not just a repetition of old material, the publishers of which have missed the boat. It begins with a careful discussion by a military expert of the strategic considerations involved, which introduces several unfamiliar ideas. Mr. Brodie believes, for instance, that in spite of the undisputed destructiveness of the bomb, it will not be possible for a nation making a surprise attack with the new weapon to avoid all likelihood of suffering from retaliation. He furthermore points out that this may be one of the chief influences inhibiting its use. Military policy, he believes, should be and can be directed not chiefly to measures intended to minimize the consequences of attack by an enemy, such as dispersal of cities, but rather to enhancing the possibility of successful retaliation and thus of preventing an attack.

Political scientists skilled in international affairs also contribute thoughtful chapters. Arnold Wolfers discusses the effect on American-Soviet relations in terms which go far beyond the alleged suspicion caused by exclusive American possession of the secret. He believes that it is possible to take measures which will make the Soviet Union and the United States each unwilling to risk a war with the other, and will add to the chance of maintaining friendly relations. Percy E. Corbett defends the thesis that the new development is likely to strengthen, rather than to weaken, the United Nations, as opposed to a supranational world government. William T. R. Fox discusses the technical problems of control and believes that it is possible to institute it along the lines already proposed. GEORGE SOULE

# A Reader's List

*Planning No. 249. Inside the Unions (Political and Economic Planning. Available through the* New Republic, *25 cents).* Nowhere is the problem of liaison between leaders and rank and file more vital than in the trade-union movement. Without room for both leadership and democratic control, unions may become anarchic groupings or degenerate into bureaucratic strongholds. PEP offers here a quantitative picture of union activity in Great Britain. The analysis is made at three distinct levels. First, there is the national officer whose "sense of reponsibility" and wider acquaintance with non-union persons may weaken his contact with the great body of union membership. Second,


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there is the active branch member who often resents the slow and careful actions of his leaders. He forms a small, well defined and stable core of union membership. The rank and file is more difficult to analyze. Obscure in both attitudes and activity, it nevertheless provides leaders, finances and fundamental loyalty. It would be good to have someone make a similar analysis of American unions.

*Great Britain in the World Economy, by Alfred Edward Kahn* (*Columbia, $4*). Dr. Kahn's book is based on his doctor's dissertation, but, although thorough and well documented, it is not unreadable. It is certainly one of the best studies of Britain's foreign-trade problem since 1919, for it takes fully into account the changes in the world economy and suggests what Britain may do for survival. The quantitative material will be of special value to serious students.

# New Republic News

Robert Morss Lovett, an *NR* editor and contributor for more than twenty years, was completely vindicated by the United States Supreme Court last week. Mr. Justice Black announced a unanimous decision of the Court to the effect that Congress had written a Bill of Attainder back in 1943 when it excluded Dr. Lovett, Goodwin B. Watson and William E. Dodd Jr. from the government payroll. The attack on Dr. Lovett and the others was made by Martin Dies, who called them "irresponsible, unrepresentative, crackpot, radical bureaucrats."

Our warmest congratulations to Dr. Lovett, who is now visiting lecturer at the University of Puerto Rico. Mr. Dies, we understand, is somewhere in Texas.

• • •

There is a wizened little fellow named Sammy who peddles magazines to both the New York *Times* and *Herald Tribune* buildings. According to the person who told us this story, Sammy does a roaring business in those spots selling the *New Republic* and other liberal weeklies. As a matter of fact, they are Sammy's most popular items. If the report we received is accurate, the *NR* won't have to worry about its format and content as far as some of Sammy's customers are concerned. Often, our informant says, we get read inside the protecting pages of the latest issue of *Life*.

• • •

Denis Plimmer, now in London, writes to us from "a flatlet with a fine view of some chimneys just off the Bayswater Road." He says there are cracks in the walls, and lots of bombed-out ruins in the immediate neighborhood. Government inspectors have X-rayed his house and report that it's two-to-one that it won't fall down. Denis swears he hears wheezing, unhuman sounds all through the night. We noticed that the letter he sent us was a little faint and hard to read. Denis doesn't seem to be banging away at the typewriter with his usual abandon.

• • •

George Orwell is the literary editor of the London *Tribune* as well as the European correspondent for the London *Observer*. *Dickens, Dali and Others*, a collection of essays, was recently published by Reynal and Hitchcock. His controversial *Animal Farm* is to be published by Harcourt, Brace, and is a reserve selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club. Mr. Orwell's essay, the first section of which appears on page 872, is reprinted by permission from *Horizon*, a London monthly literary magazine.

David Wills is a radio commentator in Washington, D. C., for station WMAL and the American Broadcasting Company. He came to radio by way of engineering, economics, business and government. He has been a foreign correspondent for the Washington *Post* in the Far East and for the *Post* and the *Christian Science Monitor* in London.

H. R. Hays has edited and translated an anthology, *Twelve Spanish American Poets*. His most recent book, published by Reynal and Hitchcock last month, is *The Takers of the City*, a novel about Mexico in the sixteenth century.

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WHEN the *New Republic* began its series by Allen Bernard, "Operation Plunder," telling the shocking story of excessive profits made by shipowners before and during the Second World War, Leonard Lyons, columnist of the *New York Post,* predicted a congressional investigation would result from that series.

Today that hope is on the way to being realized.

Senator George E. Aiken (R, Vt.), has asked the Senate to name a special committee to investigate the merchant marine scandal.

A similar resolution has been introduced in the House by Representative Richard B. Wigglesworth (R, Mass.).

Here is what these two men have to say of the series in the *New Republic:*

### Senator Aiken:

The maritime series appearing in the *New Republic* has done a great deal to arouse public opinion and create a strong demand for a thorough investigation of the Maritime Commission and the War Shipping Administration. The articles were excellent. Since their appearance, many people have communicated with me insisting upon further investigation of this situation.

### Representative Wigglesworth:

For a number of years on the floor of the House, I have called attention to scandalous conditions apparently existing in the financial operations of the War Shipping Administration and the U. S. Maritime Commission. Year after year I have inserted in the *Congressional Record* tables and figures indicating apparently gross waste of the people's money, through excessive purchase prices, through excessive charter hire, excessive insurance payments, excessive allowances for vessels traded in, and in other ways.

The articles appearing in the *New Republic* are very helpful in arousing public opinion to the need of a thoroughgoing investigation of the expenditure of the people's money by these two agencies.

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